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# BULGARIA

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*All peoples, the entire working class, the toiling peasants, all progressives throughout the world desire, not aggression and a new world war, but peace — a lasting, democratic peace and brotherhood among the nations.*

— — —

*In the field of culture there are no big and small nations, no superior and inferior peoples. Every nation, no matter how small, is capable of contributing its share to the general treasurehouse of culture.*

*Georgi Dimitroff*

*Bulgaria* — a small country in the Balkan Peninsula, whose fertile plains and fields look like colourful carpets, whose snow-capped mountain peaks reach to the sky; a beautiful country, impregnated with the aroma of rose gardens, blessed with an abundance of grapes, fruits and vegetables, of tobacco, herbs and flowers.

*Bulgaria* — a small but energetic nation which performed a very great exploit during the past fifteen years, banishing misery for ever, harnessing its rivers to dams, furrowing the fields with irrigation canals, replacing the toil of peasants by machines, building big sky-scraping factories and enterprises for making cast iron and steel, machinery and mineral fertilizers, textiles, lathes and motors.

*Bulgaria* — the historical destiny of a nation that has stubbornly defended its freedom and national dignity against enemy aggressions, that has successfully overcome the deadly threat of centuries-old oppression and has been reborn in the flames of selfless struggle for culture and progress.

*Bulgaria* — the beloved homeland of a people who, having drawn the lessons of their historical trials and tribulations,

are today, shoulder-to-shoulder with their sincere friends, building a new world.

*Bulgaria* -- a tricolour banner, freely waving over a peaceful country, which has finally found its proper place in the world family of nations and has struck out on its true path.

The present book aims at acquainting you with the People's Republic of Bulgaria and with the Bulgarian people; with their inspired work, illuminated by the lodestar of socialism, with their life, their centuries-old culture and arts, their dramatic history and their aspirations to live in friendship and peace with all the people of the entire world.

The Bulgarian people deeply value genuine friendship. And they will be grateful if this book is received as a cordially stretched out hand towards all who seek strong friendship and appreciate the blessings of peace.



## G E O G R A P H Y

*Territory, Boundaries.* The People's Republic of Bulgaria occupies the north-eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula in Europe. In latitude it lies somewhat closer to the Equator than to the North Pole. Almost a regular quadrangle in shape, it is 325 miles long and slightly over 200 miles wide. It covers an area of 42,796 square miles.

To the north Bulgaria is open towards the River Danube, which forms most of its northern boundary. The largest waterway in Europe, the Danube connects Bulgaria with

six other countries. To the east Bulgaria is washed by the waters of the Black Sea, which connects it, through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, with every other maritime country.

Bulgaria lies at the crossroads between Europe and the Orient. Of particular importance are the two international railway lines crossing the country, one leading from Western and Central Europe via Belgrade, Sofia and Plovdiv to Istanbul, and the other from Moscow via Warsaw, Roussé and Stara Zagora south to Greece, east to Turkey and west to Yugoslavia. Bulgaria's favourable geographic situation has contributed greatly to the growth of trade and international cultural contacts. In the past, however, because of the anti-national policy of the local bourgeoisie, this asset was converted into a liability, so that Bulgaria often became the arena of political and military clashes between the imperialist powers.

Bulgaria is bordered by Rumania in the north, Turkey and Greece in the south and Yugoslavia in the west.

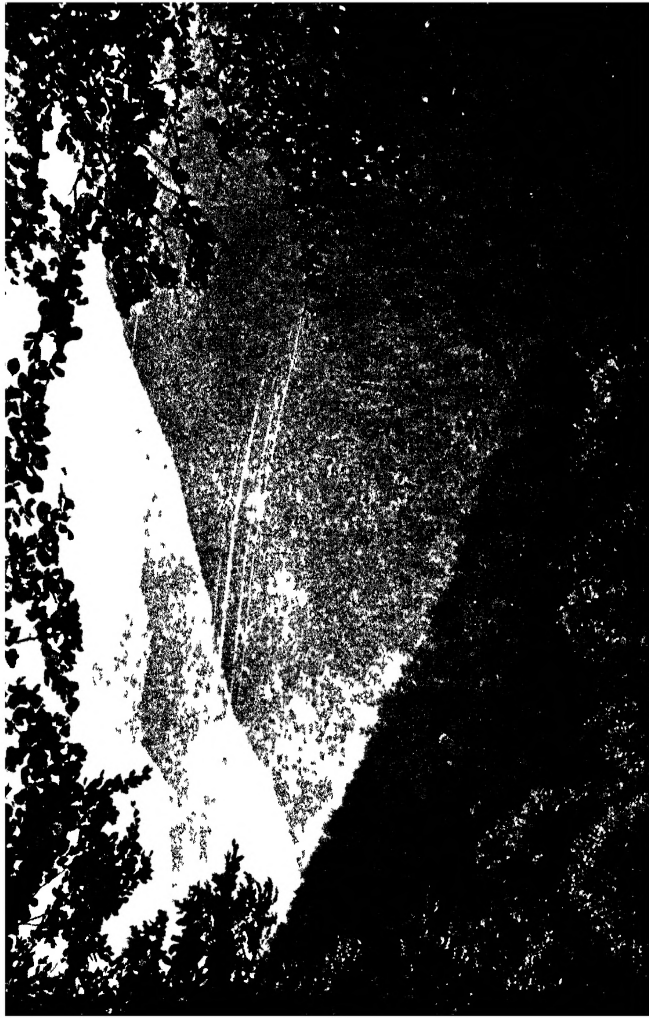
To the north the Danube forms Bulgaria's natural frontier with Rumania. Between Vidin and the Rumanian town of Calafat there is a ferryboat service, while Europe's largest bridge connects Roussé with Giurgevo. To the north-east Bulgaria has also a land frontier with Rumania, across which the railway line to the Soviet Union passes.

With the Federated Republic of Yugoslavia Bulgaria has a land frontier. The main line and the highway pass through Dragoman and connect West Europe with Istanbul via Belgrade and Sofia.

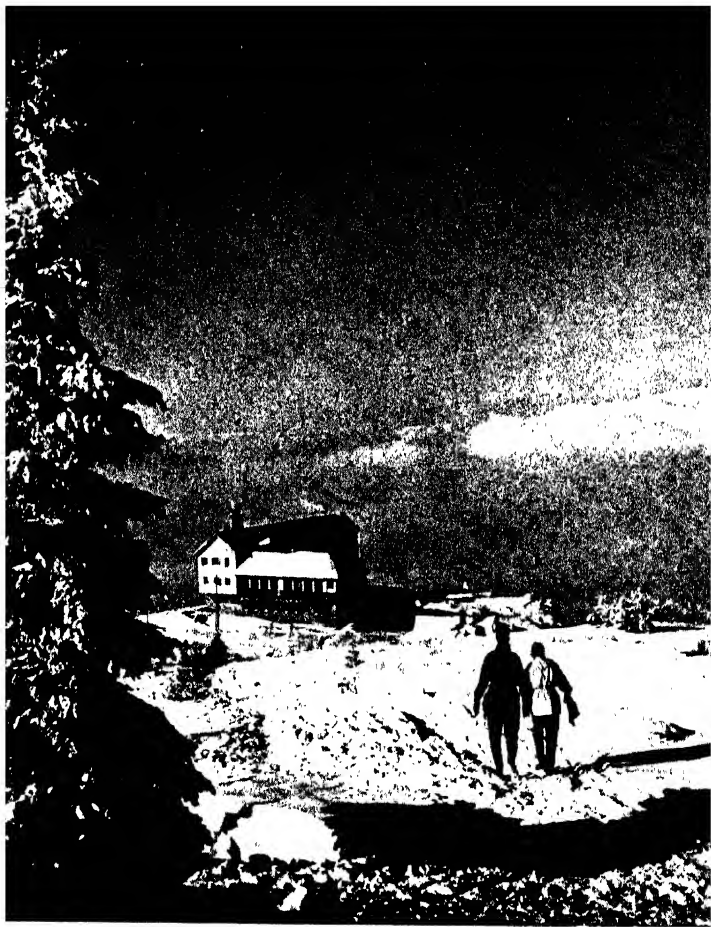
With Greece Bulgaria has a land frontier which has no great economic importance at present.

Across Bulgaria's south-eastern frontier with Turkey pass the international routes linking Europe with Istanbul and the Orient.

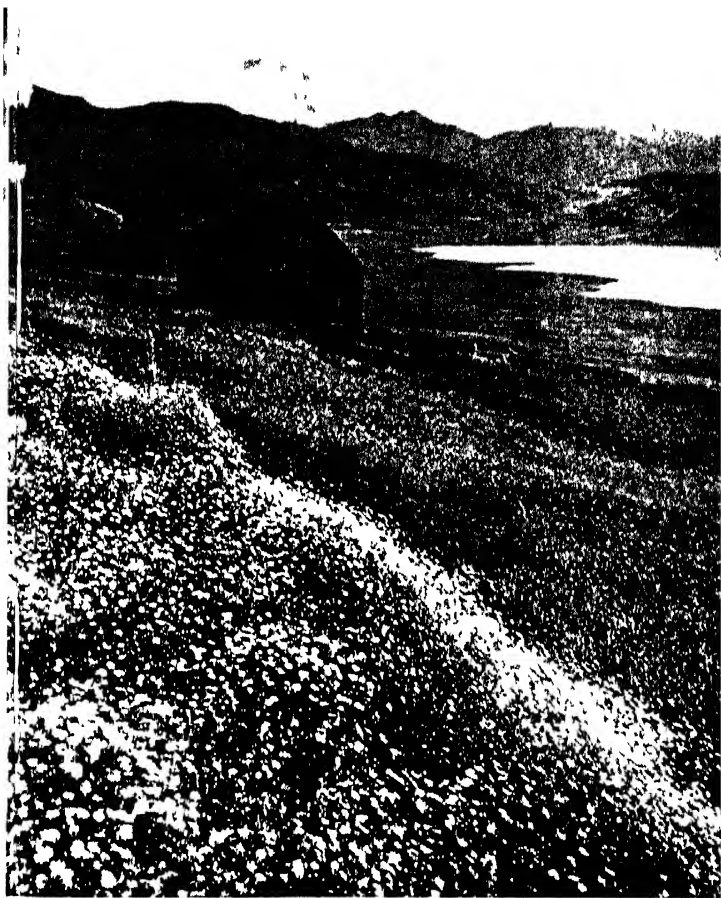
*Natural Features — Mountains, Plains and Valleys.* The Balkan Range, or Stara Planina is Bulgaria's longest mountain range. It stretches across the country from east to west, cutting it into two distinct regions. Dominating its crest are dome-shaped peaks, the highest of which is Botev Peak



*View of the Balkan Range, protector of those who fought for freedom*



*A chalet on Mt. Vitosha in winter*



*Alpine meadow in the Rhodopes*





*In the central section of the Pirin Mountains*

(7,840 feet). The high level parts of the range contain meadows, covered in spring and summer with lush grass, flowers and herbs. Large flocks of sheep and herds of dairy cattle graze here. In the highland dairies the tasty Balkan cheeses are made. In winter the mountain is covered with a thick layer of snow which melts in spring, when the sun again invites the shepherds with their numerous flocks.

Below the pastures stretches a forest belt. The uppermost belt consists of small trees, weathered by strong winds and storms. Further down, primarily along the northern slopes, begin forests of tall trees, mainly beeches, which represent a great national wealth. Valuable timber is obtained from these centuries-old forests. Convenient mountain paths lead almost to the very peaks of the range.

A number of hydro-electric power stations and two big dams have been built in recent years along the course of the turbulent rivers and streams.

The lower and most accessible mountain slopes, protected from the winds, are utilized for agriculture. Along the northern slopes, especially in the neighbourhood of Troyan, there are large plum orchards.

The Balkan mountains form an important climatic boundary, for they prevent the cold air streams from the north from penetrating to the south. The Thracian plain is therefore warmer than the Danubian plain.

The Balkan mountains are dotted with numerous chalets and are frequented by many tourists and climbers. Most of the attractive little mountain towns, such as Berkovitsa, Etropolé, Teteven, Troyan, Tryavna and Kotel, are well-known resorts.

The great diversity and beauty of the Balkan mountains provide a fascinating variety of views. But probably the most attractive region of all is the Isker gorge, which resembles a giant sword-slash across the range. For milleniums on end, the waters of the Isker river have been carving their bed into the rocks, to produce this great defile with its rare scenic beauty. Rocks soaring skyward; jagged cliffs menacingly jutting out; natural pyramids of a wondrous rocky world; deep caves still bearing the traces of early

troglodytes; remains of ancient roads and fortresses; places of historic interest; all combine to make the gorgeous panorama of the Isker defile.

In comparison with Bulgaria's other mountains, the Balkan mountains are densely populated. When at the close of the 14th century Bulgaria was conquered by the Turks, the invaders settled in the fertile plains and valleys, compelling the original inhabitants of these regions to seek refuge along the northern slopes and the foothills of the Balkan mountains. The Bulgarians who lived in these remote and relatively inaccessible parts kept alive their national spirit during the five centuries of Ottoman rule. Many of the «enlighteners» and public figures who played a prominent role in the country's national liberation struggles came from these parts.

The Balkan mountains are intimately linked with the history of the Bulgarian nation. In the mountain fastnesses roamed the haidouks, those Balkan nationalist Robin Hoods, who protected the poor and oppressed and wreaked vengeance on their tormentors. In the virgin forests rebel bands found refuge. The first uprisings of the Bulgarians against the rule of the pashas and beys started here. The highland villages and hamlets were frequently toured by Vassil Levski, the Apostle of Freedom, who was born in Karlovo, a town situated at the very approaches of these mountains. The Shipka Pass witnessed the dawn of the freedom of Bulgaria after long alien domination. The Shipka Pass is known in the nation's history as the Bulgarian Thermopylae. Here, on Stoletov Peak — bare, rocky, arid, exposed to mountain gales — a handful of Russian soldiers and Bulgarian volunteers heroically staved off the ferocious Turkish attacks and defended the pass against a numerically far superior enemy during the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-78 which led to Bulgaria's liberation.

There are wonderful legends about the Balkan mountains. The Mountain-Protector is extolled in countless folk songs and stories, and figures prominently in the nation's literature: portrayed as a father-figure, it is found in the works of the great poets Hristo Botev, Ivan Vazov, Pencho Slaveikov and others.

During World War II this mountain again became the refuge of freedom fighters — the valiant Partisans who, with the songs of the immortal bard of the national revolution, Hristo Botev, on their lips, fought and perished for the liberation of their people from the rule of domestic fascism and of nazi occupation, and for the bright future of their nation.

North of the main Balkan range rises the Prae-Balkan range, which in some places exceeds it in width. It comprises a whole series of lower crests, running roughly parallel to the chief crest. In its western part are the rocks of Belogradchik, one of the marvels of nature. This is how Felix Kanitz, a well-known Hungarian scholar and traveller, who visited Bulgaria prior to its national liberation, describes them:

«We entered the rocky world of the town of Belogradchik. The moon had just made its appearance and cast its light on the most fantastic and wondrous view that man can imagine... But how can one picture something that simply cannot be described by pen? When visiting Bulgaria in 1841, the French traveller, Academician Blanqui, correctly claimed that neither the famous Aulioul gorges in the Provence nor the Alps or Pyrenees can be compared in beauty with the gorges and rocks of Belogradchik. I believe that none who for the first time sees the enchanting panorama of Belogradchik can possibly remain indifferent. When looking at this world of sand and rocks, steeped in bright colours by the sun's purple rays, with its fantastic groups of "houses", "obelisks", "ships", "people" and "animals", the origin of the Arabic tale about the petrified town in Cereñaica became clear to me.»

In the eastern part of the Prae-Balkans lies another famous and picturesque region — the Turnovo mountain. The Yantra river, winding its way like a serpent through the rocky hills before taking a straight course through the Danubian plain, has produced here a fairy-tale panorama. Amid the mountain folds, pierced by the Yantra in the course of milleniums, amphitheatrically on several hills lies Bulgaria's medieval capital, Turnovo. No traveller, no artist, no visitor who has seen this place, has been

able to resist the magic charm and allure of this picturesque city.

«On my way to Gabrovo», writes the poet and novelist Ivan Vasov, «I cast a last farewell look at Turnovo and, stunned by its wonderful panorama, whispered the utterance of the simple-minded Franciscan monk who described Turnovo in the 17th century: "It is simply beyond words."»

To the south of the Balkan mountains and running parallel to them, rises the lower Sredna Gora chain. Its curved slopes are covered with tall beech forests, above which extend spacious pastures. Near its highest peak, Bogdan (5,300 feet), is the historic locality of Oborishtë — a small meadow, nestling in a deep dale amid age-old beech groves, where in 1876 the representatives of the enslaved Bulgarian people gathered and decided to start what has come to be known in Bulgarian history as the April Uprising.

Sredna Gora is closely linked with the struggle of the people for freedom. Its inhabitants took a most active part in the National Revival and in the struggle for national liberation. Together with the entire nation they also participated in the September 1923 Uprising, the first anti-fascist uprising in the world. And again, during the last war Sredna Gora served as a refuge for many a Partisan detachment.

Thanks to its large forests, pastures and water power, the industrious population of the Sredna Gora succeeded, already in Turkish times, in developing their crafts, particularly in the manufacture of heavy homespun and of braid. Their goods found a ready market even in Istanbul, where they also sold cattle. After Bulgaria's liberation in 1878 the old trades declined. Today cattle-breeding, lumbering and mining are the chief occupations here. The romantic town of Koprivshitsa is known as the showcase of Bulgarian national architecture; it is also a very popular mountain resort.

The southern part of Bulgaria is occupied by the Rila-Rhodope massif, comprising the Rila, Pirin, Rhodope and other lower mountains.

Rila is the highest mountain range in the Balkan Peninsula; its highest summit, Stalin Peak, rises to an altitude

of 9,660 feet. Viewed from the surrounding valleys, this impressive range seems to stab the skies with its many dented peaks and cliffs. Lovers of nature are particularly fond of Rila, which they often visit in order to enjoy its beautiful lakes — the blue eyes of the mountain, in which the peaks are reflected with the clear sky and the clouds. The slopes of Rila, which abound in meadows, are also covered with centuries-old forests, both broad and needle-leaved. Stags, deer and wild goats inhabit these parts. The waters of this mountain range, tamed by three dams, feed several power stations. The most refreshing Rila water provides the nation's capital with excellent drinking water.

To the south of Rila rises the Pirin mountain, its worthy rival in altitude, beauty and majesty. Pirin has a pronounced alpine character. Here spring and winter landscapes seem to combine most harmoniously. A large number of crystal-clear lakes sparkle under the blue sky. In Pirin the edelweiss grows, as well as fir-trees and old, tall resinous pines, resembling the columns of an ancient Greek temple. From its summit, Vihren (9,620 feet), the peak of winds and tempests, one gets a unique view of South Bulgaria.

The Rhodope mountains form a large massif, a veritable labyrinth of crests and valleys. Already in antiquity the Roman poet Ovid was captivated by the Rhodopes. The mythical but immortal Thracian bard Orpheus lived here; in the past this mountain was named Orphic Forests, and today one of its peaks bears the name of Orpheus. The highest peak in the Rhodope is Golyam Perelik (7,230 feet).

Although closely connected with Rila, the Rhodopes differ greatly from it. They are lower in altitude, have no rocky cliffs and dented peaks, and had no glaciers during the ice age. Their crest is wide, branching off in different directions into a considerable number of mountain chains, some of which are higher than the main crest.

The Rhodopes combine scenic beauty with considerable underground wealth, for they are rich in ores. The western part is covered with coniferous forests and can boast of the most spacious mountain pastures in Bulgaria. The

Batak hydro-electric power system, largest in the country, was built here recently. The Eastern Rhodopes abound in deposits of lead, zinc, silver, chrome, iron and copper ores, trass — almost ready-made natural cement — and other minerals, which are now being exploited. For this purpose mines have been sunk, and flotation, metal-extraction and other factories have been built here.

The Rhodopes are not densely populated like the Balkans. This is particularly true of the western parts, less so of the eastern parts, which are lower and more conveniently situated for the growing of crops and especially of the famous Djebel tobacco, which is cultivated in the Arda river valley. In connection with the intensified exploitation of the mineral wealth, a number of new industrial centres and miners' settlements have sprung up today in the Eastern Rhodopes, such as Madan, Roudozem, Batantsi and Strashimir. The local population consists predominantly of Pomaks, i. e. Bulgarians who were forcibly converted to Mohammedanism in the 17th century. Some Turks live in the easternmost part. Industrialization has attracted specialists and constructors to these parts from all over the country.

The Strandja mountain rises in the south-easterly maritime part of Bulgaria. It is covered with ancient oak and, in the upper regions, beech forests. In its eastern maritime part, where the influence of the Black Sea is felt most strongly, vegetation is particularly diversified, including as it does evergreen Mediterranean plants, wild vines, olives and figs. Wild animals are well represented in the Strandja, for here are found foxes, wolves, deer, boars and jackals.

In 1903 the Strandja population, then still smarting under the Ottoman yoke, staged a big uprising. Songs about the heroism of these freedom fighters are still sung today in the Strandja villages.

The other most important mountains in West Bulgaria are Vitosha and Ossogovo.

Mt. Vitosha rises above Sofia as Vesuvius does above Naples. Its slopes, especially those on the north towards the Sofia plain, are steep and covered with low forests. The crest is wide and pretty level, covered with a soft carpet

of grass, moss and peat. The river Strouma has its source here. One of the mountain's attractions are the moraines, or «stone rivers», the most popular of which is Golden Bridges, which can be reached from Sofia by bus. Coniferous and deciduous forests grow on Vitosha, as well as mountain flowers and herbs scarcely found elsewhere in the country. Vitosha, according to a major overall plan, is gradually being transformed into a national park, where not only the inhabitants of Sofia but people from all over the country will be able to climb and rest.

Ossogovo rises above the Kyustendil valley. Along this mountain zigzags the frontier between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Its summit is Rouen Peak (7,430). The rounded crests are covered with spacious lush pastures, while on the slopes rare pine and beech forests grow. The mountain range ends right near Kyustendil in Hissarluk Hill, which has been turned into a park and afforested with beautiful pine trees.

Bulgaria has a diversified surface, upon which mountains and hilly places alternate with lowlands and plains, picturesque canyons and valleys.

The Danubian plateau or hilly plain extends from the Danube to the foothills of the Balkan mountains and eastward to the Black Sea. In area it covers about a quarter of the total territory of Bulgaria. Rich in fertile soils and watered by the large irrigation systems which were constructed during the past decade, this wide plain is the granary of the country. To the north it ends in the Danubian strand, a narrow strip of land along that river. The terraced banks are covered with vineyards and orchards.

South of the Balkan and Sredna Gora mountain ranges, all the way to the extensive Rhodope mountain massif, stretches the Thracian plain. Across it flows the Maritsa, Bulgaria's largest river. Already in antiquity this plain was inhabited by Thracian tribes who gave it the name of Thrace. Homer called Thrace the land of fertility, the mother of the fleeced sheep and wonderful horses which in racing contests proved to be «as fast as the wind». Thracian wine, as Homer testified, was exported to distant countries. And the Thracian river Maritsa, the sacred Hebrus, is extolled



by the Roman poet Ovid. Thrace is the homeland of Spartacus, the renowned leader of the greatest slave revolt in ancient Rome.

Today the waters of the Maritsa, as well as those of several artificial lakes, are used for irrigation. All over this plain, especially in the Plovdiv and Pazardjik lowlands, extend vineyards, market gardens, orchards, strawberry beds, tobacco, cotton and hemp fields. The bountiful plain is densely populated with rich villages and towns, the largest of which are Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Pazardjik and Dimitrograd.

Most of the fields in Bulgaria are situated along river valleys. To the south of the Balkan mountains stretch the sub-Balkan valleys. Two of these — the valleys of Karlovo (Levskigrad) and Kazanluk — are famous for their rose gardens. Bulgarian attar of roses enjoys a high reputation on the world market. In the production and export of attar Bulgaria holds first place in the world. Transplanted from Asia Minor (originally from Persia), the bushes of the oil-bearing rose, a delicate and most capricious flower, have found their true home in Bulgaria. The soil of the Rose Valley is alluvial, mixed with clay, pebble and sand, and does not retain superfluous humidity. At the same time, it is most favourably exposed to the sun and protected from the cold north winds by the Balkan mountains. The numerous rivers and brooks, flowing down from the Balkans and the Sredna Gora, maintain a high air humidity during rose picking, when rainfalls are frequent too. Finally, the great experience and mastery of the local population in the cultivation of the oil-bearing rose is a contributory factor in its supreme quality.

There are also small, fertile fields in the valley of the river Strouma, which flows from Mt. Vitosha south to the Aegean Sea. One of these — the Pernik or Dimitrovo valley — is famous for its rich coal deposits, while the Kyustendil valley prides itself on being the orchard of Bulgaria. Here thrive aromatic apples, blue plums, juicy pears and cherries, known both at home and abroad.

Already in antiquity the coins of the renowned Roman town Ulpia Pautalia — the ancient name of Kyustendil



*View of the southern part of Sofia with Mount Vitosha in the background*



*Alexander Nevsky Memorial Church, Sofia*

which prospered in the 2nd and 3rd century A. D. — bore fruit and grape baskets. Among the natural assets of the valley are its hot mineral springs; today the town of Kyustendil is one of the foremost spas in the country.

Further south, along the valleys of the Strouma and Mesta rivers on both sides of the Pirin mountains, there are numerous dales, warm with southern sunshine. Here thrives the sugar-rich grape from which the famous dark red, heavy Melnik wine is produced. Further south still, under the warm influence of the Aegean Sea, are found high-quality tobacco, peaches, cotton, ground nuts, peppy, sesame and figs.

*Underground Wealth.* Bulgaria is a land with a considerable wealth of underground resources: coal, metal, ores and minerals, oil, numerous mineral springs, and so on.

Coal is one of Bulgaria's greatest riches; there are deposits of brown, lignite, black and anthracite coal. Brown coal ranks first in economic importance. It is used as a fuel in factories and railways, as well as for the population at large. The foremost brown coal deposits are found in the Dimitrovo basin. Lignite coal contains fewer calories but is found in abundance; the available reserves should suffice for centuries. In Thrace the large Maritsa-East thermal power plant is now under construction; it will have a capacity of 300,000 kw and will burn only lignite coal. The main basins of lignite coal are those of Dimitrovgrad in Thrace, Sofia and Lom. The Dimitrovgrad or Marbas coal basin is exceedingly rich in lignite coal deposits.

Black coal deposits are less frequent and are found in the central part of the Balkan mountains. Black coal is used in metallurgy, where it is coked. Anthracite coal is mined in the Isker Gorge.

Iron ore deposits are found near Yambol, in the Rhodope mountains and elsewhere. A new, exceedingly rich deposit was discovered in 1955 by Bulgarian geologists in the vicinity of Kremikovtsi, not far from Sofia. A large opencast mine is already in exploitation here. A metallurgical plant with an annual capacity of a million tons of metal is to be built near Kremikovtsi during the Third Five-Year Plan.

Rich deposits of lead, zinc, silver, iron, chrome and other ores, are being tapped in the Eastern Rhodopes. Copper ores are mined in the Strandja mountains not far from Bourgas, in the Sredna Gora near Panagvurishité, and in the Western Balkans near Vratsa. The Balkan mountains also contain uranium ore deposits.

Bulgaria is also rich in other minerals. At Provadiya, not far from Varna, there is a huge rock salt deposit. In various parts of the country high-grade limestone and dolomite, widely used in the production of lime and cement, as well as kaolin, trass and other minerals are found.

In 1951, after unremitting geological prospecting with the aid of Soviet specialists, oil deposits were discovered in the Dobroudja along the Black Sea coast. These deposits are already under exploitation. More than ten different petrol products are obtained from Bulgarian oil. In addition to the old refinery in Roussé, which used to refine Rumanian oil, several new refineries will be commissioned in the near future.

Bulgaria is exceedingly rich in mineral springs, of which there are several hundred, gushing forth at over 200 places. According to the chemical composition of the water, these are radioactive, alkaline, sulphurous, ferrous, bromic and other springs, which have excellent curative powers. The best-known cold mineral springs are those in the Narechen resort, in the vicinity of Assenovgrad, in the Eastern Rhodopes. The hottest spring in Bulgaria, with a temperature of 86°C, is that in Sapareva Banya, near Stanke Dimitrov, in the northern approaches of Rila. Recently a genuine geyser, whose waters have a temperature of 102°C, made its appearance here. There are many spas in Bulgaria. The best-known of these are Vurshets, near Berkovitsa, Sofia and its suburbs (Ovcha Koupel, Bankya, Gorna Banya and Knyazhevo), Kyustendil, Hissar and Momina Banya, Velinograd, Sliven, Haskovo and Yambol. Modern balneo-sanatoria have been built at many spas, where every year thousands of invalids take successful cures. Gradually the mineral baths, many of which were already known in Roman times, are regaining their former fame as renowned resorts which attract many foreigners.

*Climate.* The greater part of Bulgaria has a temperate continental climate, which is more pronounced in its northern regions. In summer it is warm and pleasant in the lowlands, while at the same time the snow-capped peaks of the highest mountains sparkle in the sun.

The country's mean annual temperature is about 12°C. The mean temperature in January is 0°, dropping in the north to -2° and rising in the south to 2°C. It is not harmful to autumn sowing, or to the vineyards and orchards. Bulgaria's climate favours the development of agriculture and cattle-breeding, as well as the cultivation of such industrial crops as tobacco, cotton, anise and peppermint.

The mean annual rainfall is about 650 litres per square metre. In summer, however, the rainfall is inadequate. To combat drought, an extensive irrigation system has been built up.

Bulgaria can be divided into several climatic regions. The Danubian plateau has a predominantly continental climate, while the Thracian plain has a climate that is transitional between continental and Mediterranean. The southernmost part of the country has the warmest climate with hot summers and mild winters. The Black Sea coast has a cooler summer and milder winter. The highland regions, which lie over 3300 feet above sea level, have a cooler climate and heavier rainfall.

*Water Resources.* Bulgaria is fairly rich in water resources, containing many rivers as well as springs and mountain lakes. To the east the country is washed by the waters of the Black Sea, while to the north it is bordered by the Danube river.

Covering an area of 165,000 square miles, the Black Sea is almost four times as large as Bulgaria, reaching a depth of 7,200 feet. Its water mass is divided into two quite different layers, the upper one of which — extending to a depth of 500 feet — is saturated with oxygen and is rich in flora and fauna, while the lower one has no life because it is saturated with the poisonous hydrogen sulphide gas.

The Black Sea is Bulgaria's sole seaway, its window to the outside world. Most of its foreign trade goes by sea. The Bulgarian maritime fleet owns a number of modern ships, some of which were built at the Varna shipyards.

The Bulgarian Black Sea coast is diversified and beautiful, sharply indented, rich in bays, peninsulas and capes. There are numerous fine beaches with golden yellow sand. There are no sharks or other dangerous and poisonous fish or sea animals in the Black Sea, and the tides are negligible.

Bulgaria's largest seaside city and port is the renowned holiday resort of Varna, with 120,000 inhabitants. Nessebur, one of the oldest towns in the country, has a most picturesque location, old churches, an interesting architecture, and one of the finest beaches in Europe. Southward there follows Pomorié, the town of sea salt; then Bourgas, the country's second port; romantic Sozopol, the Apollonia of antiquity; Michurin, nestling in the folds of the Strandja mountains, where eucalyptus trees, tea and tangerines grow; and finally, Ahtopol, the southernmost Bulgarian town on the Black Sea.

The Danube river has a rich historic past. Already in the 7th century B. C. the Miletian Greeks navigated their boats upstream, reaching the Iron Gate, the westernmost point of the Bulgarian bank. At the time of the Roman Empire the Danube was a natural fortress against the invasions of the barbarians. Almost all the Bulgarian towns on the Danube rise on the sites of former Roman cities and fortresses, the ruins of which are still preserved. In the Middle Ages Bulgaria had five fortified commercial centres on the Danube: Vidin, Nikopol, Svishtov, Roussé, and Silistra.

Today the Danube is an important factor in the economic life of Bulgaria, considerably facilitating its commercial intercourse with the Danubian countries of Central Europe. Bulgaria's Danubian bank is densely populated, including eight towns and over 100 villages.

The westernmost Danubian town is Vidin, which can look back on a turbulent past. Already in Roman times it was an important fortress-town. The large, 20-centuries-old fortress is still well preserved. Destroyed and re-established,

the present fortress was rebuilt by the Austrians in the 17th century and completed by the Turks in the 18th century on the old foundations. Vidin is an important administrative and economic centre of the rich north-western part of the country. An extensive irrigation system has recently been built in the Vidin lowlands.

Further down on the Danube is the rich village of Archar. The nearby ruins of the ancient Roman town of Raciaria are still visible.

Lom is Sofia's natural outlet to the Danube and as a Danubian port ranks second only to Roussé. It is the centre of a rich agricultural region, where grapes, melons and water melons grow in abundance.

Next comes Oryahovo, situated amphitheatrically on the steep bank of the Danube, amid attractive vineyards. Its immediate neighbour is the large village of Gigen, lying near the ruins of the once important Roman town of Ulpia Escus.

Nikopol, founded in the 7th century under the name of Nicopolis—the city of victories—is situated on hills. Proud of its glorious past as a strategic centre, the town is today of only secondary importance.

At the southernmost bend of the Danube lies Svishtov, through which passes the most direct route from Germany and Czechoslovakia to Thrace and the Aegean Sea. Here once rose the Roman fortress of Nove. During the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-78, which brought liberation to Bulgaria, the Russian troops crossed the Danube at Svishtov.

Until the end of the 19th century Svishtov was a famous commercial centre and vied with the briskest European ports on the Danube. Some local merchants even had business offices in Vienna. Today Svishtov has a modern harbour and is the third-ranking Bulgarian town on the Danube.

Bulgaria's foremost Danubian city is Roussé, a major commercial, industrial and cultural centre, with a population of 84,000. It lies on the most direct Sofia-Bucharest-Moscow route. Roussé is not only a modern port but also one of Bulgaria's most attractive and well-built cities. First among its many industrial enterprises ranks the Georgi Dimitrov Agricultural Machinery Works.



Although destroyed on more than one occasion, Roussé has always risen anew from its ashes like a phoenix. In the 2nd century A. D. the Romans built the fortress Sexanta Prista here -- the city of the sixty ships, where the Roman Danubian fleet was stationed. Ruins of this fortress are still extant. There are also ruins of the nearby medieval Bulgarian fortress of Cherven. Under Turkish rule Roussé was an important commercial and industrial city and a powerful fortress with great strategic importance for the Ottoman Empire. In 1811 the stone walls of the fortress were destroyed by the Russian General Kutuzov.

Roussé is closely linked with the national liberation struggle of the Bulgarian people.

North-east of Roussé along the reaches of the Danube extends the wide Brushlyan lowland, where a large-scale irrigation system was built in recent years.

Toutrakan lies on a beautiful hill facing the Danube. An important grain centre, it is known as a town of fishermen and vine-growers. Under Turkish rule it was strongly fortified and was captured by the Russian General Suvorov.

The most north-easterly Bulgarian town on the Danube is Silistra, known once as Durostrum (strong fortress), when it was an important advance post of the Roman Empire. One of the few monuments of Roman art which have been preserved was recently discovered in the vicinity -- a 4th-century tomb with wonderful frescos.

From Silistra the wide fertile plateau of the Bulgarian Dobroudja opens out.

*Rivers.* Bulgaria has a fairly dense network of rivers. Most of these are short, pretty shallow, with an irregular water flow, and non-navigable (the Danube, of course, is an exception). Their waters are used for irrigation and for the production of electric power. Along the river valleys, roads have been built. The Bulgarian rivers flow into the Danube, the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea.

Frequent droughts were until recently one of the bane of Bulgaria. Untold damage was caused to the crops. Only under the people's rule were measures taken to combat drought. A number of large dams, irrigation systems and

pumping stations were built and continue to be built. At present over a million acres are being irrigated.

The Batak hydro-electric power system in the Western Rhodopes is the largest of its kind in Bulgaria. It comprises two big dams -- Vassil Kolarov and Batak, two smaller dams -- Beglika and Toshkov Chark, two underground hydro-electric power stations -- Batak and Peshtera, and one surface power station -- Aleko. In addition to the production of power, the waters of the Batak electric power system are used to irrigate over 50,000 acres of the most fertile part of the Thracian plain (the Plovdiv and Pazardjik valleys), where such intensive crops as fruit, grapes, strawberries, vegetables, rice and cotton are grown.

Another important hydro-electric power system is now under construction along the Arda river in the Eastern Rhodopes. Two big dams -- Stouden Kladenets and Kurdjali -- have already been built, with electric power stations attached to them. The waters of those dams will irrigate tens of thousands of acres in the rich districts of Haskovo and Harmanli in Thrace.

Other major dams are:

Stalin dam on the Isker river near Sofia, the largest dam in the country. The artificial lake has an area of 29 sq. km (670 million cubic metres). From here the waters are channeled to the Passarel and Kokalyane electric power stations and then used to irrigate almost 150,000 acres of land in the Sofia valley.

Georgi Dimitrov dam on the Toundja river in the Rose Valley, with the Georgi Dimitrov and Stara Zagora hydro-electric power stations. The waters of the lake irrigate 20,000 acres of arable land in the Kazanluk valley and 80,000 acres in the Stara Zagora valley in Thrace.

Alexander Stamboliiski dam on the Rossitsa river in the northern folds of the Balkan mountains. Its waters irrigate 100,000 acres of land in North Bulgaria.

Stoudena dam on the Strouma river at the western approaches to Mt. Vitosha. Its chief purpose is to supply industry in Dimitrovo and especially the Lenin Metallurgical Works with the necessary water and power.

Beli Isker dam on the Isker river in the Rila mountains, which ensures Sofia's water supply. Its waters are driven by an electric power station.

Topolnitsa dam, the waters of which irrigate some 50,000 acres of land in Thrace.

Kalin dam in Rila, composed of several interconnected artificial lakes, the smallest of which lies some 7,900 feet above sea level. In spite of the inadequate water supply, the great fall makes it possible to produce electric power in considerable quantities.

Apart from these big dams which are of national significance, hundreds of smaller dams of local importance have been and continue to be built. These are used for irrigation and fishing purposes.

Powerful irrigation systems, tapping the water current of rivers where there are no dams, have been built. The most important of these are the Danube irrigation systems, making use of its waters; the Cherven Bryag system at the Isker; the Purvomai system at the Maritsa; and the Sandanski system in Pirin. The drilling of wells for tapping subsoil waters is also being undertaken.

In addition, reclamation projects are being carried out. The swampy but fertile lowlands along the Danube and elsewhere in North Bulgaria have been drained.

*Forests.* Forests cover 29 per cent of Bulgaria's area and represent a great source of national wealth. About a third of them consist of long-boled trees. Among them are valuable coniferous forests in the Western Rhodopes, Rila and Pirin. Longoza, a dense centuries-old forest along the lower reaches of the Kamchiya river, consists of tall elms, ashes and oaks. Beech forests are found principally along the northern slopes of the Balkan mountains, and oak forests in their eastern part, in Loudogorié (North-East Bulgaria) and in the Strandja mountains.

The forests, especially in the higher mountains, are inhabited by deer, stags, boars, wild goats and predatory animals such as bears, wolves, and foxes. The most important game are hares, quail and turtle-doves. The most common singing birds are nightingales and blackbirds, while



*Street in Sofia*



*Angling in a dam lake*



*The Georgi Dimitrov Dam Lake in the Valley of Roses*



*The Monks in the Belogradchik rocks*

the birds of prey most usually found are eagles, hawks and falcons. The only place in Europe where a number of rare southern birds, such as the pelican, are found is Lake Srebarna in the Dobroudja.

Forests occupy especially extensive areas in the Balkan, Rhodope, Rila, Pirin and Strandja mountains. Every year they supply between five and six million cubic metres of timber. Prior to 1944 the forests were subjected to rapacious exploitation. Almost 20 per cent of the forest areas were destroyed and laid waste. Today particular care is devoted to forestry: special schools and nursery-gardens have been created, airplanes spray the forests with insecticides, and about one and a half million acres have been afforested. A nation-wide drive has now been started for afforesting the waste lands. By 1960 some two and a half million acres are expected to be afforested.

In the past, dry winds, hot in summer and cold in winter, would frequently destroy crops in the Dobroudja, which was practically devoid of trees. Today nine consecutive forest-shelter belts, planted in accordance with an overall plan, act as barriers to these destructive winds. The new green belts, thousands of miles long, have already grown to a respectable height. In addition to keeping off the winds, they retain the snow cover and soil humidity, protecting the crops from freezing and drying up and the soil from erosion. The forest-shelter belts comprise not only ordinary trees but fruit and mulberry trees as well, which are already bearing fruit.

The diversity of landscape, the picturesque juxtaposition of high alpine mountains with lush fields and shady valleys, the beautifully indented Black Sea coast with its wonderful beaches, bays and lagoons, the fine climate which ranges from continental in the interior to almost Mediterranean along the coast, the fertile lowlands, the modernly cultivated fields crisscrossed by a network of irrigation channels, the colourful fruit, vegetable and rose gardens, the innumerable springs — all help to make Bulgaria a veritable garden of Eden, copiously blessed by nature, to which the hand of man has added during the past decade a number of attractive artificial lakes.



*Population.* Bulgaria has a population of 7,629,000 (census of Dec. 1, 1956). Its density is 69 persons per square kilometre.

The oldest known inhabitants of this country were the Thracians, who founded many localities, some of which still exist under different names—Pulpudeva (Plovdiv), Serdica (Sofia), etc.

Several centuries B.C. in the eastern parts of the country, especially along the Black Sea coast Greek settlers founded the colonies of Odessus (Varna), Mesembriya (Nessebur), Anhiolo (Pomorié), Apollonia (Sozopol), etc.

In the 1st century A. D. the Romans conquered present-day Bulgaria. During the next several centuries it was invaded by Huns, Goths, and Avars (Hungarians).

In the 7th century the old Bulgars came here, settling originally around the Danube delta. A few years later they concluded an alliance with the numerous Slav tribes which had settled throughout the Balkan Peninsula and in 681 they founded with them the new Slav-Bulgarian state. Few in number, the ancient Bulgars were gradually absorbed in the Slav ocean, leaving behind only the name of the new nation and their superb military organization.

The Bulgarians of today belong to the group of Southern Slavs. Close racial and linguistic affinities connect them with the Russians and the other Slav peoples.

Bulgaria is inhabited by a compact mass of Bulgarians, who for long have represented a well-defined nationality. In addition, there are a few national minorities; the most numerous of these is the Turkish minority, which lives primarily in North-East Bulgaria and in the Eastern Rhodopes. They are the descendants of the Turkish population which has remained here from the time of the Ottoman Empire, of which Bulgaria was then but a province. Scattered all over the country there are Gypsy minorities, descendants of the Indian pariahs.

Two small minorities of considerable ethnic interest are the Karakachani and the Gagaouzi. The former are the remnants of the romanized Thracians — the original natives of these lands. Shy of mixing with the remaining population, the Karakachani — who are cattle-breeders

and inhabit the highlands — cling to their particular customs, arts and way of life. The Gagaouzi are scattered along the Black Sea coast north of Varna. Some scholars believe that they are the descendants of the ancient Pechenegs.

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria guarantees equal rights to all citizens, irrespective of their national origin, and all take an active part in the present upsurge of the country.

In the decade which elapsed between 1946 and 1956, the population of Bulgaria increased by about 600,000, i.e. by roughly 8 per cent. The rapid demographic increase is due chiefly to a rise in the birth rate and a fall in the death rate, which in turn are the result of improved medical care and the rising standard of living.

As the last census reveals, the social structure of Bulgaria has undergone profound changes. The urban population has risen between 1946 and 1956 from 26 to 35 per cent of the total, as a result of the country's rapid industrialization and of the mechanization of its agriculture.

Already in the early Middle Ages the Bulgarian nation had a comparatively high cultural level. The fairly rich literature, created in this country, was passed on to its western and northern neighbours as well as to the Russians. Bulgaria is the land that gave birth to the Slav alphabet, which was the work of the brothers Cyril and Methodius. Although conquered on two occasions and spending a century and a half under Byzantine rule and later five centuries under Turkish domination, the Bulgarian people preserved their language, culture and way of life.

After 1944, when a People's Democracy was established, Bulgaria underwent a genuine cultural revolution. Science became democratic in character, education flourished, press and book circulation increased considerably, literature and the arts made significant advances. All this has led to a steady rise in the cultural level of the population and to its active participation in the general cultural competition between all nations.

*Inhabited Localities.* Bulgaria's picturesque natural setting, rich historic past and diversified social and economic life have put their mark on its localities.

The ancient Thracians were the first, as far as we know, to build towns and villages here. The ancient Greeks founded their colonies along the country's Black Sea coast. Later still, the Romans ruled these lands for five centuries, building numerous towns and fortresses, especially along the Danube. That is why today most Bulgarian towns on the Black Sea coast descend from ancient Greek settlements, while on the Danube they descend from Roman fortresses. Sofia, the capital, used to be known in Roman times as Serdica, Plovdiv as Trimontium, and Stara Zagora as Augusta Trajana.

Remains of many other ancient fortresses and towns have been and continue to be discovered, as for instance, Ulpia Escus, Nicopolis ad Istrum, and Abritus.

In the early Middle Ages the towns and villages had already assumed a Slav character. With the Ottoman invasion in the 14th century, they fell under Turkish-Moslem influence. The chief occupations at that time were agriculture and cattle-breeding. Villages and agglomerations of shepherd's huts tended, therefore, to predominate.

At the time of the Turkish rule a number of localities in the Balkans, Rila and Strandja, developed into important artisans', mining and commercial centres. It was among them that the Bulgarian Revival had its origin.

After Bulgaria's liberation from Turkish rule a new chapter began in the development of the inhabited localities. Around the new railway stations, settlements and even whole towns sprang up, while many of the old small villages, located on major crossroads, also developed into brisk towns.

After 1944, as a result of the country's industrialization and of its general economic progress, a number of new industrial centres made their appearance, while the faces of hundreds of towns and villages were radically changed.

There are two types of inhabited localities in Bulgaria — scattered and centralized. The former are usually found in the highlands. Some of these consist of individual, separate economic units, while others are completely integrated settlements. The towns and villages, as well as the new

category of industrial agglomerations, belong to the second type.

At présent Bulgaria has 112 towns and some 5,500 villages and hut localities.

Most of the towns are situated in the Danubian lowlands, the Thracian plain, the sub-mountainous valleys, and along the Danube and the Black Sea coast. Sofia, the capital, has 726,000 inhabitants, followed by Plovdiv (163,000), Varna (120,000), Roussé (83,000), Bourgas (73,000) and Pleven (58,000). An up-and-coming city is Dimitrovgrad, a new centre of heavy industry. During the 1916 - 56 decade Kurdjali, the centre of non-ferrous metallurgy, doubled its population, while the new town of Madan, the centre of the Rhodope mining basin, increased its population 17 times over.

*Sofia, Bulgaria's Capital.* Sofia, capital of Bulgaria, lies in a 2,000-foot-high plain which is surrounded by a blue string of mountains and hills - Mt. Vitosha, Lyulin and the Balkans. Situated in the very heart of the Balkan Peninsula, this city is an international key-point half way between the Danube and the Aegean Sea as well as between the Black Sea and the Adriatic Sea.

In spite of many historic trials and tribulations, Sofia has continued to exist through the centuries. Two millenniums ago it was already a prosperous town. Founded by the ancient Thracians, it assumed considerable importance as part of the Roman Empire: Emperor Trajan gave it his family name, calling it Ulpia and authorizing it to mint its own coins. Later, in the 3rd century A.D., Constantine the Great intended to move the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Serdica as it was now called. As described by the Romans, it was «a large and beautiful city», a centre of the Western and Eastern part of the Empire; the emperor called Serdica — «my Rome». There are some monuments extant of that period of splendour: a Roman bath, turned into the St. George Church in the 5th century, now found in the inner yard of Hotel Balkan in the City Centre; and the St. Sophia Church, destroyed by the Goths and the Huns, later turned by the Turks into a mosque,

and again restored. In the Middle Ages this church made a strong impression on all travellers who passed through the town -- to which, according to many historians, it gave its name. This Roman style basilica represents a unique historical and architectural monument in the Balkan Peninsula.

Serdica's prosperity was cut short by the Goths' and Huns' invasions of the Roman Empire. At the time of the great migrations, the town was captured and destroyed by Attila (447). Under Emperor Justinian in the 6th century, Serdica re-emerged as an important centre within the confines of the Eastern Roman Empire, later known as the Byzantine Empire.

In 808 the town became part of the Slav-Bulgarian state and a unifying centre of the Slav population in the Balkan Peninsula, and was therefore renamed Sredets (Central).

At the time of the Ottoman invasion, the town had high and strong fortress walls which, according to the description of the contemporary Turkish geographer and traveller, Evliya Chelebi, had 27 gates, 1,700 turrets and 17,000 battlements, manned by dauntless soldiers. Unable to capture the city either by direct assault or by siege, the Turks finally resorted to stratagem and treachery to achieve their aim (1386).

Under Ottoman rule Sofia became the central headquarters of Turkey's European vilayet (province). At first the town continued to prosper, but with the onsetting decline of the Ottoman Empire it too began to regress.

Sofia played an important role at the time of the Bulgarian Revival. It had a Bulgarian school; there also emerged a literary school. During the second half of the 19th century another school was added, thanks to the donations of Ivan Denkoglou, a Sofia merchant living in Moscow. A great patriot, Denkoglou also gave scholarships to Bulgarian students abroad, one of whom -- Sava Filaretov -- later returned to Sofia, where he opened a Bulgarian school which became a model of its kind in Bulgarian lands. At the library and reading club, opened in Sofia, all Bulgarian newspapers, published abroad by political emigrants and revolutionaries were received. The nation's foremost revo-

lutionary, Vassil Levski, often came to Sofia, where he organized an underground revolutionary committee. Later the Turks arrested this great Apostle of Freedom and hanged him in Sofia. Today a monument stands there in his honour.

During the April 1876 uprising and the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78, the inhabitants of Sofia suffered greatly from the terror and persecution of the Turkish enslavers; gallows were raised in the town, and many townspeople were killed or exiled. In January 1878 the Russian troops liberated Sofia. The Bulgarian population greeted them with enthusiasm, showering flowers and gifts on them.

After the liberation of the country, Sofia was proclaimed its capital (prior to Turkish rule Turnovo had been the capital). It soon grew into a large, modern city. Here began to be concentrated the Ministries, administrative offices, cultural institutions and the university, light industry developed, and Sofia quickly became a major commercial centre. Modern buildings sprang up: banks, commercial and administrative offices, hotels, stores, and residential buildings.

During World War II Sofia suffered heavily from Anglo-American air raids. No fewer than 12,500 private homes, as well as many offices and enterprises, were destroyed. Hardly a building was left unscathed. But within a few years of the people's rule, the war scars were healed and a stupendous urbanization development programme was launched.

Today Sofia is a modern European metropolis, quickly approaching the million population mark. In summer its streets and avenues are steeped in the dense greenery of decorative trees. Because of its many public parks, which spread refreshing coolness on hot summer days, the capital is often described by foreign visitors as a garden city.

Housing construction during the past 13-14 years has been most intensive. More than 100,000 citizens have been resettled into new homes. At practically every corner one can see attractive new apartment houses and residential homes. Many of the city's central arteries, such as Georgi Dimitrov Blvd., Stamboliiski Blvd., Dondoukov Blvd.

and September Ninth Blvd., have completely changed in appearance. A number of new districts and settlements have sprung up: Lager, Krasna Polyana, Zaharna Fabrika, Lozenets, Ivan Vazov, etc. These modern housing projects represent in reality small, neatly laid out suburban towns. Other major housing projects are now under construction: Lenin, Buxton (named after an English friend of Bulgaria), Zaimov, Georgi Dimitrov, and so on. The impressive new City Centre represents a harmonious architectural entity, comprising the Party House, the Central Department Store, the Balkan Hotel, the Balkan Cinema, the Ministry of Heavy Industry, and the Ministry of Electric Power. In the coming years the 16-storey building of the Sofia City Council and the imposing Council of Ministers building are to rise on the spacious central square.

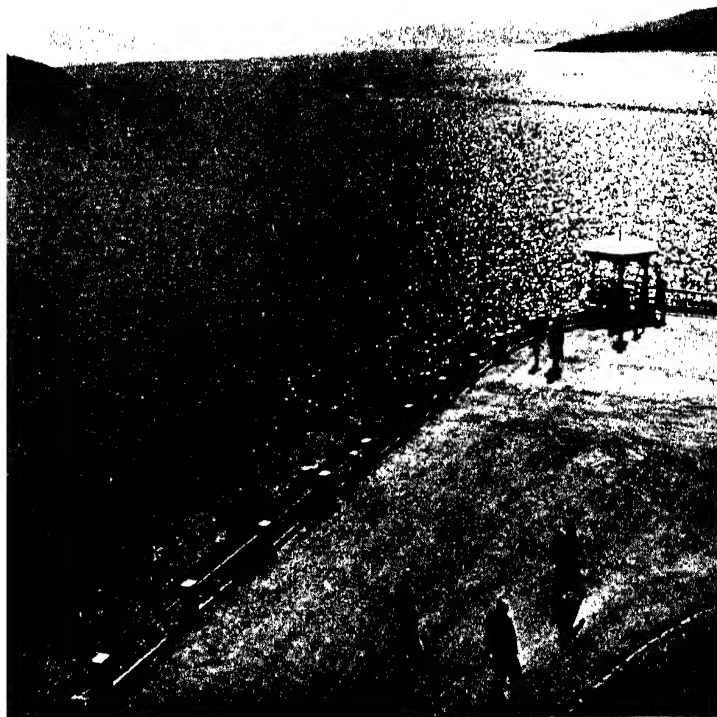
Sofia is the foremost industrial centre of Bulgaria. Many new works and factories were built here during the past decade. These establishments, together with the local crafts co-operatives, account for over one-fifth of the country's total industrial output.

Sofia is also the nation's cultural and scientific centre. Here are concentrated the main colleges and universities, the Bulgarian Academy of Science, theatres and museums, publishing houses, newspapers and periodicals, and architectural monuments.

Sofia and its suburbs Ovcha Koupel, Knyazhevo, Gorna Banya, Pancharevo and Bankya boast of some of the finest mineral springs.

Sofia's natural setting at the foot of Mt. Vitosha is truly unique. This mountain — the lung of the capital — is a most convenient place for tourism, sports and rest. Its Black Peak (7,600 feet) offers a gorgeous view. Already more than a century ago the well-known French scholar and traveller, Ami Boué, was so fascinated by this view that he exclaimed poetically:

«The high Olympus is romantic. The Macedonian town of Voden is enchanting, but where else in the world can man see so many captivating pictures from one single peak? The view from the Black Peak surpasses everything that I have seen.»



*Morning on the Stalin Dam Lake near Sofia*





*Sofia, view of the National Bank*

Vitosha is a most accessible and hospitable mountain. Cosy lodges, refuges and huts have been built in its most picturesque spots. During the past few years Vitosha has been turned into a national park. A modern panoramic road leads from the capital to the very heart of the mountain, and is now being prolonged to the Black Peak. Many new paths and alleys crisscross the mountain. New lodges, rest homes, hotels and restaurants are being built, as well as a second cable lift.

Modern new attractions of the capital are the Stalin and Pancharevo lakes, part of a major hydro-electric power project, which have become a favourite weekend attraction for tourists, holidaymakers and lovers of water sports. Sailing and motor boats cruise on these lakes, the waters of which are to feed the future navigation canal which will pass along the foot of Mt. Vitosha, a couple of miles from Sofia.

Stalin lake and its impressive dam serve, however, not only as a recreation centre. Its main purpose is a functional one: in addition to the electric power it produces, it will supply the entire Sofia plain with water through a dense network of canals and thus transform it into a wonderful orchard and market garden.



## RESORTS, BEAUTY SPOTS, PLACES OF HISTORICAL INTEREST AND SPAS

*Plovdiv.* Plovdiv is Bulgaria's second city in size and importance and is one of the most ancient and beautiful settlements in the Balkan peninsula.

Three elements come to fashion Plovdiv's profile — the syenite hills on which the town's houses are built one above the other, the big Maritsa river which meanders between the hills, and the Thracian plain in the middle of which the town has been flourishing for thousands of years as a

major trade, military and cultural centre of several civilizations.

The Thracians, its first historical inhabitants have left the earliest records of the town. Later on, after continuous wars, the settlement passed into the hands of Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander of Macedonia. Philip came to love the picturesque town dearly, lying as it did «in a luxuriant rich plain and unparalleled in beauty» and gave it his own name of Philippopolis. Philippopolis rapidly grew into a big and important fortress town.

But the falling of the town into the hands of Philip of Macedonia marked the beginning of stormy events in its history. In the course of several centuries the town was repeatedly captured and destroyed by Greeks and Goths, by Huns, Romans and Turks. During the Roman domination of the Balkan peninsula Plovdiv took the name of Trimontium (three hills). Historians of those days report that the Roman emperors Trajan, Marcus Aurelius and Hadrian turned the town into a brilliant centre of the eastern part of the Roman Empire where the most eminent administrators, rich merchants and many creators of art lived; it is «the most magnificent, the largest and most beautiful town and its beauty shines from afar» (Lucian). Trimontium abounded in forums and marble temples, magnificent monuments and public buildings, wide streets, beautiful residential houses, trade establishments and baths. Luxurious banquets were held here, while popular celebrations and sports contests similar to the Olympic games, regularly took place in the famous marble stadium in the town.

The decline of the Roman Empire ushered in a period of turbulent new changes in the town's history. It was frequently pillaged and demolished, until finally the Slavs and Bulgarians came to Thrace to record a new page in its history. During the second half of the fourteenth century Plovdiv, together with the rest of Bulgaria, fell under Ottoman bondage for five whole centuries. The Turks called the town Philibé and here stationed their higher administration and military garrison, while merchants and craftsmen developed the town into a centre equal in importance

to Sofia at that time. Plovdiv took an active part in the National Revival. Owing to this, after Bulgaria's liberation from Ottoman bondage and before the Reunification the town was made the capital of Eastern Roumelia.

The liberation from age-long slavery gave a powerful impetus to the development of Plovdiv. The most progressive-minded and enterprising Bulgarians from the whole of Southern Bulgaria thronged to the town and created a lively trade, local industry and rich culture there. Thus within a short span of time Plovdiv, like Sofia, rapidly grew in population and assumed a first-rate importance as an industrial, trade, communication and cultural centre. Plovdiv lies in the middle of the rich Thracian plain which produces an abundance of vegetables, tobacco, fruits, strawberries, grapes, rice and cotton. The major industries — food-processing and textiles — based upon the wealthy agricultural region, are developing at rapid rates.

Plovdiv rivals Sofia particularly in its lively home and foreign trade. According to an established tradition, an International Trade Fair is organized here periodically, with the participation of scores of countries and hundreds of firms from all over the world. A veritable town to house the fair has been built on the left bank of the Maritsa river.

Parallel with its industry and trade, Plovdiv is rapidly developing its culture. It has a number of important cultural and educational institutions and universities, such as the I. P. Pavlov Medical Academy and the V. Kolarov Higher Agricultural and Economic Institute. A first-class symphony orchestra came into existence a few years ago and is now regularly giving concerts. The Plovdiv inhabitants are particularly proud of their new Opera and the new Theatre, their Gallery of Art, its rich libraries, the Ethnographical Museum and particularly the Archaeological Museum which houses the unique Thracian gold treasure. Festivals of the amateur activities of the population of South Bulgaria are regularly held in Plovdiv. On one of the syenite hills providing a bird's eye view of the town stands the house where the French poet Lamartine lived. Close to this hill lies the old Turkish quarter, which still preserves the atmosphere of bygone days.

But though a town of ancient culture, a real treasury of the rare monuments of older civilizations, Plovdiv is still today a centre of active life. By its busy air and economic importance, its beauty and cultural activities Plovdiv worthily rivals even the country's capital.

Plovdiv is always beautiful and attractive. But it assumes a really festive look during the Fair. Then the town puts on its festive garb. Its streets are noisy and joyous. The gay crowds of thousands of visitors throng the streets, parks and places of entertainment. Hundreds of holiday trains, carrying visitors to the Fair, keep arriving in Plovdiv from all parts of the country, during these twenty days of September. Thousands of impatient visitors arrive and depart by plane, and a constant stream of cars and buses from all corners of this country and from abroad jam the streets and boulevards of the town. Scores of thousands of visitors attend the Fair every day. There is practically no Bulgarian who can resist the great desire to see the latest achievements of the country's industry and agriculture which are displayed in the vast pavilions of the Fair. The visitor can also follow the technical progress of scores of foreign exhibitors at the Fair. During these busy September days, in addition to foreign tourists and journalists, you may meet foreign trade representatives, directors of factories and trade enterprises, merchants from all parts of Europe who are busy negotiating and signing contracts with the Bulgarian trade enterprises.

Plovdiv has another attraction for foreign visitors. It is the centre of a district which is suitable for tourism, medical treatment and rest. From here one may visit Velinograd — a famous mountain resort and spa, Hissar — an ancient settlement with numerous curative mineral springs and modern sanatoria, or the Rhodopes, a magnificent mountain range with many folds overgrown with endless pine trees, full of mushrooms and game, covered with luscious Alpine meadows. There, among the blue forests and the gay carpets of meadowland, lies the beautiful mountain resort of Pamporovo, which is frequented by thousands of guests all the year round.

*Bankya*. A few miles from Sofia to the west, nestling among the Lyulin mountains, lies Bankya, one of the country's foremost spas and resorts.

At the end of the 19th century all the little locality could boast of was a mineral bath which had been built shortly before Bulgaria's national liberation. A few years later, however, at the beginning of this century, the curative power of the waters and the charming natural setting rapidly transformed this forgotten and forsaken highland village into a well-known balneological resort and spa. Its close proximity to the nation's capital was another asset, securing a steady flow of invalids, convalescents and ordinary holidaymakers to this fast-growing resort. Lying some 2,100 feet above sea level, Bankya has a temperate continental climate with a summer that is not too hot and a winter that is rather mild. The air is fresh, purified by the coniferous and deciduous forests; there are no strong winds or any mist. These climatic advantages, coupled with the curative powers of the water, make Bankya a wonderful resort and spa. The springs of Bankya have a temperature of 36.5° C and a moderate radio-activity. The water is recommended for diseases of the heart vessels, hypertension, myocardioclerosis, disorders of the peripheral and central nervous system, neurosis, disturbed metabolism and rheumatism.

The bounties of nature reveal their full value when they become accessible to man. During the postwar years this spa has become accessible to working people. Today, Bankya has over 500 villas and 20 large rest homes and balneo-sanatoria, in which 2,000 people are treated at a time.

The large public bath, built some forty years ago in a small, attractive park, is no longer the dominant building in Bankya, for several sanatoria today exceed it in height. The buildings do not form an architectural whole, but the natural setting has created an inherent and more successful harmony, which fully satisfies one's sense of beauty. An open-air swimming pool with lukewarm mineral water has been built in the centre of the spa, which in summer exerts a magnetic attraction for Sofia's youth.

Bankya is a fairly new resort, but the time is not very distant when its fame will spread far beyond the confines of Bulgaria. A mere ten miles from Sofia, it can easily be reached by bus, car or train.

*Hissar.* Some 25 miles north-west of Plovdiv, in the rolling hills of the Sredna Gora, lies Hissar, which in contrast to Bankya is a spa whose fame goes back to antiquity. Monuments of the centuries are found here at every step. The beginnings of this locality are lost somewhere in the mist of prehistory. Later Thracian tribes left a large number of tumuli and necropolises here. In the 2nd century A.D. the Roman conquerors brought fame and splendour to the little locality. Hissar became a major curative and administrative centre. In the first half of the 4th century it blossomed forth as a large, prosperous town with two public baths. A hundred thousand slaves built the Hissar fortress, a considerable part of which is still preserved. The rich town was a tempting bait for many conquerors. In the course of the centuries it was destroyed time and again by the Byzantines and Turks. No one, however, succeeded in plugging its life-bringing sources. Hissar emerged victorious from all the vicissitudes of the centuries.

Sixteen mineral springs whose waters differ in temperature (between 36° and 48°C) and curative powers make Hissar a potential rival of Karlovy Vary and other world-famous spas. Its waters, both for bathing and drinking purposes, are highly recommended for disorders of the kidneys, liver and gall bladder ducts, for rheumatic, gynaecological, skin and stomach-intestinal troubles.

In the past few years new modern hotels and balneosanatoria have been springing up in quick succession. In the last couple of years alone 18 balneosanatoria and hotels, and villas and rest homes for over 5,000 people have been built. Hissar is visited every year by more than 50,000 people, including thousands of foreigners.

In antiquity Hissar was the foremost balneological centre of the whole Roman Empire. In time it will regain its former glory and reputation as a spa, thanks to the unsurpassed



curative powers of its waters and to its fine southern climate.

*Ribaritsa.* The Vit River cuts deeply into the green massif of the Balkan Range and at the bottom of this cool valley lies the resort of Ribaritsa. When one travels upward along the asphalt road beside the greenish swiftly flowing Vit, the mountain unfolds like a shell; before the stunned eyes breath-taking views, following one another in quick succession, are revealed. The wonderful panorama of the town of Teteven with its garland of rocky peaks holds one's gaze for long. Let us stop on the square of the old town, listen to the rustle of the poplars in front of the public library, take a walk along the cobblestoned streets meandering between houses with broad eaves which preserve the charm of the past century. Let us then go back to the bus and continue on our way upward. The road winds along the river, among orchards and big blossoming chestnut trees. Gradually the drama-packed landscape with the sharp dented peaks assumes a calmer face, the valley broadens out. We have reached Ribaritsa.

Ribaritsa is one of the best known low-lying mountain resorts in Bulgaria. Its altitude above the sea level barely exceeds 2,000 feet. There is no inhabited locality here in the ordinary sense of the term, but just rows of houses and villas flanking the road for more than six miles. The charm of Ribaritsa consists in its wide dew-decked meadows descending towards the river, crossed by strips of beech forests. Here you find no pine trees, no sharp tors and cliffs; everything is calm and gentle. Boundless deciduous forests cover the mountain like a folded tufted rug, the slopes gently descend downward, the outlines and colours of the landscape are mellow and comforting. The clear and rapid river jumps between the white stones, resounding in the space, here and there slowing down into green-eyed pools, where barbel and chub are playing. Patient anglers sit here all day long, but occasionally they are driven off by the invasion of boys and girls who come here to bathe, dive and swim in the pools. The real kingdom of the anglers, however, is further up along the little brooks which flow down in every fold of the mountain. There, in



*Ploudio with one of the picturesque syente hills*



*Part of the old town of Melnik, famed for its wines*



*Turnovo, an eternal subject for artists*



*Turnovo, the inn built by Kolyu Ficheto*

the waters as transparent as silver veins, the mountain trout is to be found.

When the grass is in bloom, Ribaritsa looks like an endless coloured carpet stretching out for miles. When the hay is gathered in, the intoxicating odour of the grass is wafted over the valley for days on end. In August raspberries and bilberries grow in the mountains, under the giant shadow of Vezhen Peak. Peasant women carry them down in woven baskets. In September the air becomes quite pure; it is so quiet then that the jingling of bells coming from far away meadows where sheep flocks graze is heard all around. And in winter there is much snow and sun. Then Ribaritsa turns into a favourite attraction for skiers.

*Rila Monastery.* Austere, proud, inaccessible and enchantingly beautiful are the Rila mountains. Vertiginous slopes, covered with centuries-old pines, fall down sharply. High up, clearly delineated on the wonderful background of the blue sky, the alpine peaks draw dented silhouettes. Eagles circle slowly and majestically below the clouds. Waters bubble, brooks gurgle, the Rila river foams in its bed. There is a delicious aroma of resin, ferns and herbs all around. Unless you have been here you cannot claim to have felt the scenic beauty of Bulgaria.

Amid this wonderful natural setting, less than 80 miles from Sofia by a beautiful paved road, lies Rila Monastery, surrounded by its medieval walls. It was founded in the 10th century by the hermit St. Ivan Rilski. A few steps from its vaulted gate, the monastery assumes a much less forbidding aspect. An unusual wealth of forms and colours, a lacework of caves, verandahs, winding stairs, a braid of ornaments present themselves to the eye — a veritable architectural symphony. Built some 125 years ago with the voluntary donations of people from Thrace and the Dobroudja, by the deft hands of craftsmen from Kostour in Macedonia and Trun, of woodcarvers from Debur and Samokov, of inspired church painters from Razlog, this monastery represents a real monument of the rich historic past of the Bulgarian people, of their highly artistic craftsmanship.

The monastery has 173 rooms which are seldom empty. In the wide courtyard rises the dark 14th-century Hrelyu Tower. In the monastic museum priceless old printed books, royal chrysobulos, sultan's irades, and other manuscripts are preserved. Among them is the first Bulgarian globe, made by the learned monk Neofit Rilski.

On the other side of Rila Monastery lies the modern Balkantourist hotel. Small villas are sprawled on the meadows near the river. Further upstream, where the fighters for freedom sought refuge in the virgin forests, lies the Partisan meadow. Pathways branch out from the monastery in all directions, leading across precipices and gorges to the chalets and beautiful lakes, to the breath-taking peaks of the Rila mountains.

*Pamporovo.* In contrast to the rugged and awe-inspiring Rila and Pirin mountains, whose peaks reach high into the sky, the Rhodopes seem calm and gentle. This is felt most strongly here in Pamporovo, some sixty miles south of Plovdiv. After laboriously climbing up the road along the deep gorge of the Chaya river, the bus emerges into the open: the sky suddenly seems larger, wide and colourful meadows, dotted with villas and beautiful pines, stretch out endlessly before one's eyes. The dense grass gently responds to the breeze, the clear brooks emit a pleasant sound. To the north and to the south, as far as the gaze stretches in the bluish haze of the summer noon, the green waves of mountains follow one another. The majesty of the Rhodopes resides in their breadth.

Pamporovo lies at an altitude of over 4,500 feet above sea level. The air is so light here that one can never get enough of it. Here there is almost always sun --- that strong and bright mountain sun, which makes one's skin look like bronze. In the evening it gets pleasantly cool, the aroma of the pines and the grass seems to become even stronger, and no matter how white the moonlit nights may be, the charm of the quiet mountain vanquishes the most obstinate sleeplessness and makes one feel drowsy.

Pamporovo is an ideal winter resort, with five months of snow. The sloping meadows become first-rate ski grounds,

In the morning the sharp but healthy cold pinches one's cheeks, at noon the brightness of the sun is blinding and the skiers indulge in their sport, stripped to the waist and wearing dark eyeglasses.

There is a good Balkantourist hotel in this winter resort, as well as the rest homes of various trade unions and the Ministry of Defence, which are frequented during all four seasons. Invalids suffering from disorders of the respiratory organs, chronic bronchitis, pleuresy, bronchial asthma, secondary anaemia or who are merely convalescing have found their stay in Pamporovo most rewarding.

*Gorna Banya.* The balneological resort of Gorna Banya lies less than six miles from the centre of Sofia, and is conveniently reached by train, tram, trolley or motor vehicle; as a matter of fact, it has long since become an inseparable part of the capital. The zone of suburban villas begins at Krasno Selo, climbing up towards Mt. Vitosha through Boyana and Knyazhevo, and then switching downward in a semicircle towards the Lyulin hills with Gorna Banya. The villas, closely surrounding the public baths, have long since covered the site of the primitive village of yore. Today they cover the meadows ever more densely, and penetrate the copses which Lyulin carefully extends towards the plain. Gorna Banya lies some 300 feet higher than Sofia and in winter, when fog envelops the capital, it stands out like a sunny island.

The mineral water of Gorna Banya is known far and wide. Sold in bottles, it is a hyperthermal, weakly mineralized, hydro-carbonic, sulphate, soda water, also called alkaline-Glauber water, which long retains its properties without undergoing any change in composition. Odourless, it has a most pleasant taste. It is particularly useful as a regulator of digestion, but is recommended also for the organs of the excretory system, liver and gall bladder ducts, and basal metabolism. That is why thousands of perfectly healthy people often drink it. Its curative powers are most pronounced in the field of stomach and liver disorders. Recently a balneological polyclinic has been added to the public baths, so as to render the treatment under medical control as effective as possible.



In summer Gorna Banya is visited by thousands of invalids and convalescents from all over the country, who come here for treatment and rest.

*Velingrad.* This is a mountain town with over 20,000 inhabitants; it was named in honour of the young heroine Vela, who fought and died as a Partisan in battle against the fascists. Lying some 2,400 feet above the sea level amid the centuries-old pine forests of the Western Rhodopes, Velingrad is an ideal combination of mountain resort and spa. Protected from the winds by the rolling hills, it has a mild continental climate, with plenty of sun. This resort can be reached by bus or rail, a narrow-gauge line branching off at the stations of Septemvri and Pazardjik from the Sofia-Plovdiv-Istanbul central railway line.

There are over seventy mineral springs in and around Velingrad, which range in temperature all the way from 37° to 72°C. Some of these (in Chepino) are radio-active. The water is hyperthermal, hydro-carbonic-soda, fluorine and hydrogen-sulphurous, and is recommended for disorders of the limbs and joints, chronic rheumatism and rheumatism of the joints, infect-arthritis, inflammations of the central and peripheral nervous system, gynaecological and metabolic disorders, general physical and nervous exhaustion.

Most of the springs used for balneological treatment are grouped in the three municipal districts: Ludjené, Chepino and Kamenitsa, all three of which have modern baths. The most frequented bath is Veliyuva Banya in the Ludjené district. In Kamenitsa, where the springs on the right bank of the Stara Reka (old river) alone have a flow of 3,000 litres per minute, hothouses for the production of early vegetables have been built. In this district there are deposits of curative mineral mud.

Many villas and rest homes have been built in the resort of Velingrad; most of these are frequented throughout the year. Towering above all is the palatial rest home of the trade unions with its own mineral water pool and offering many other facilities for year-round treatment and rest. The balneo-

sanatorium is also a modern, rather impressive building. In Ludjené district there is an outdoor swimming pool with mineral water and an artificial beach.

Velingrad is a resort that has much to offer to foreign tourists and invalids in the way of modern comfort and conveniences.

*Kyustendil.* A modern resort in Western Bulgaria, lying on the Sofia—Gyueshevo railway line, Kyustendil, with a population of over 25,000, is a town that dates back to the time of the Thracians. Its first appearance in recorded history is in the 1st century A. D., when the Romans erected fortress walls, temples, a theatre, a stadium and a forum here, as well as an aqueduct and the Asclepion, a monumental public bath. Ruins of the Roman buildings have been found at the foot of Hissarluk Hill, around which was situated the ancient town of Ulpia Pautalia.

Kyustendil can boast of three major assets as a resort: its mineral waters, its fine climate, and its superb fruits.

Within the town itself there are over 40 hot mineral springs with a total flow of 4,000 litres per minute. The water has a temperature of 73.4°C and is classified as hyper-thermal, hydro-carbonic-soda, hydrogen-sulphurous and fluorine. It is used both for drinking and bathing and is recommended for disorders of the limbs and joints, the upper respiratory ducts, the peripheral and central nervous system, gynaecological, skin and traumatic troubles, inflammation, chronic poisoning with heavy metals.

Besides the three public baths there are certain special balneosanatoria, one of which belongs to the Miners' Union, as well as those of other professional and public organizations. These are all provided with modern conveniences and are open throughout the year.

The waters of the mineral springs are used also for hot-houses.

Kyustendil is a climatic resort. Lying at an altitude of 1,750 feet above sea level, it has a mild climate which is temperate continental, with elements of transitional Mediterranean. Hissarluk Hill, at the foot of which the new

town is built, is covered with a 2,000-acre pine forest.

This town, so richly blessed with the bounties of nature, is also the country's foremost fruit centre, especially of apples and plums from which the famous Bulgarian plum brandy is made, known as «slivovitsa».

*Sapareva Banya.* An old settlement dating back to the time of the Thracians and Romans, the birthplace of Belisarius, the famous Byzantine general (505-565), Sapareva Banya has been a spa since time immemorial.

The village, completely steeped in orchards, nestles in a fertile valley between the Rila and Verila mountains, at an altitude of 2,400 feet above sea level. It is connected by regular bus lines with Samokov, Kyustendil and Stanké Dimitrov, which is only eight miles away and lies on the Sofia-Blagoevgrad-Koulatia railway line.

The great wealth of Sapareva Banya consists of three abundant mineral springs, one of which — a geyser of volcanic origin — appeared only in the summer of 1957. The waters of this geyser are the hottest in Europe, with a temperature of 102° C and they have a flow of 40 litres per second.

The waters of one mineral spring which were caught for the needs of the local balneosanatorium, have a temperature of 86°C and are hyperthermal, sulphate-soda, hydrogen-sulphurous, fluorine. When bathing, this water has a good effect on persons suffering from disorders of the limbs and joints, and heart vessels, from gynaecological and skin disturbances, chronic poisoning and diseases of the central nervous system.

The local balneosanatorium, a combination of hotel and public baths, is a modern building in a beautiful park of pines and birches. Nearby, at the very approaches to the Rila mountain, is a large linden forest.

The Central Council of the Trade Unions recently built a large rest home in Sapareva Banya, which makes use of the second mineral spring in the village and disposes of a physiotherapeutic department and a massage room.

New balneosanatoria are to be built at the new spring — the geyser. Part of this hot water will be used for the hot-house production of vegetables.

In the centre of the village there is a well-preserved church dating back to the early Middle Ages, with exquisite architectural forms.

*Momin Prohod.* According to an old legend, once upon a time, in the ancient town of Philippopolis, today's Plovdiv, the only daughter of a notable fell ill from an unknown disease. Her arms and legs were paralyzed. Her old father grew very sad and unable to find a doctor, he decided to send her all the way to Sofia. They set out in the early morning, but nightfall reached them at some 45 miles from Sofia. And since this place seemed to be the most suitable for spending the night, they unhitched the carriages. To the north rose Eledjik Peak, which keeps off the cold winds and renders the winter milder and the autumn longer and warm. To the south the Rhodope mountains cast their dark outline. The night was quiet and calm. Only the warm water, gushing forth from the cracks of a rock, flowed downward in a noisy, turbulent brook. The fires went out, the tents fell silent. Only the pretty girl lay awake. The wicked disease kept the much-needed sleep away from her, and until late into the night she lay there listening to the song of the forest and the bubbling sounds of the water. Later she awakened her father and asked to be carried next to the brook to hear the warm water gurgling. They obeyed her request, and then she asked them to dip her feet in the water. And lo and behold, a miracle happened. Her feet began to twitch, she slowly started moving them. Three days later the girl was able to walk.

That is why, they say, the name of Momin Prohod (Maiden's Pass) was given to this spot. The mineral spring became famous overnight and invalids began to flock hither from near and far, to return home completely recuperated. Buildings began to spring up and gradually there emerged a whole settlement.

Today Momin Prohod is one of Bulgaria's most popular spas, boasting of a large and modern balneosanatorium,

which caters for nearly 1,000 patients. In the near future another five modernly-equipped balneosanatoria are to be built here.

The waters of this spa are recommended for disorders of the limbs and joints, chronic forms of rheumatism, infect-arthritis, post-fractural conditions, troubles of the blood vessels and peripheral and central nervous system, skin and gynaecological diseases and non-tubercular disorders of the respiratory organs.

Bulgaria is a land of rare natural beauty and diversity, rich in clear drinking water and even richer in mineral springs. With its charm it lures thousands of working people every season, who frequent its many spas and resorts to restore their forces and strengthen their health in surroundings that only fifteen years ago were beyond their wildest dreams.

*The Bulgarian Black Sea Coast.* The Black Sea has undergone big changes in the course of the earth's existence. At first a big ocean, it gradually receded under the restless pressure of the land masses to assume its present shape between Bulgaria's eastern shores and the Caucasus; it is now practically an inland sea.

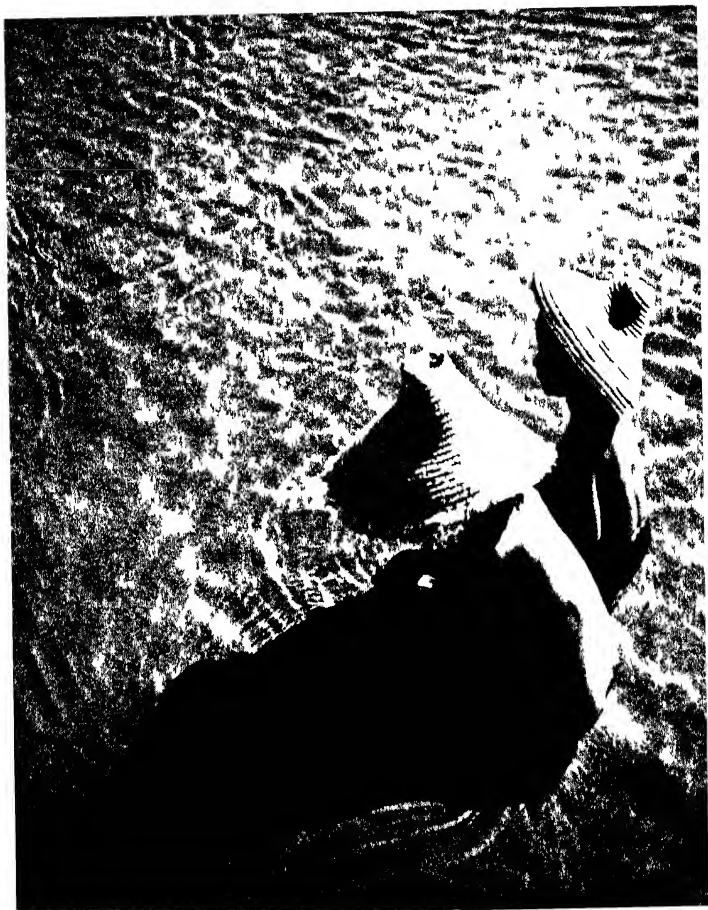
The Black Sea has provided a livelihood to many generations of fishermen. It supports a large number of edible fish. Of particular importance to the coastal population are the belted bonito, the sardine, the mackerel, the anchovy and the dolphin.

New studies of the Black Sea have established, contrary to the former estimates that were made, that the density of fish per acre is several times greater than that of the Mediterranean Sea. This is due to the abundant plankton in the upper waters which serves as food for most of the fish. Prior to World War II Bulgaria's annual catch would often attain to as much as 100,000 tons. Today, by means of improved fishing instruments, motor boats and air-planes which locate and follow the shoals, the annual catch has increased several times over.

The Black Sea exerts a favourable influence on the climate of the coastal belt. Here the winter is mild, while



*Visitors from foreign countries try to capture one of the many beautiful scenes along the Bulgarian coast*



*Two snow-white mushrooms standing in the blue waters of the sea*

the summer is pleasantly refreshing. The autumn is characterized by quiet, cloudless days, which are clear, sunny and warm. In summer and autumn the sea is calm; there are no ebbs and tides, and the sand strip of the beaches always remains unpolluted by slime and sea alluvion. The water has a mean summer temperature — from June to September — of 23°C.

The salt content of the Black Sea — 18 kg per 1,000 litres of water — is about half that of the oceans.

The sea also has a favourable influence on the coastal flora. Here thrive almonds and figs, peaches and grapes, the eucalyptus, and in the southern regions — lemons and oranges, tangerines and pomegranates.

For Bulgaria the Black Sea is a wide window on the outside world. Ships of all nations cast anchor at its large ports, unloading foreign goods and filling their holds with Bulgarian farm produce, machinery and finished goods for export to distant lands.

*Balchik.* Balchik is the northernmost pearl on the beautiful necklace of resorts along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Situated in a beautiful bay, protected on the north-east by Cape Kaliakra, the town resembles a huge Roman amphitheatre emerging from the sea.

Balchik can look back on a long and glorious history. In the 5th century B. C. the Miletian Greeks were the first to settle here. Because of the numerous springs in its environment, they called the new locality Kranoi — the Springs. Later, probably because of the highly developed viticulture, the town was renamed Dionysopolis, in honour of the god of the grape and its wine. After its conquest by the Turks, it adopted its present name from its governor Balik.

In the early part of this century, when it was temporarily under Rumanian rule, Balchik developed into an important export harbour and major resort on what was then called the «Silver Coast».

To the south of Balchik lies the former palace of the late Rumanian Queen Mary, which was designed in an Oriental style. It is now turned into a rest home for scientists and artists. The park with its cool alleys, little brooks, rustling



waterfalls, steep winding paths and quiet pools, is one of the most beautiful gardens in Bulgaria. Less than four miles north-east of the town, on the shores of the Touzla salt lake, a new resort, named after the lake, is making its appearance, with villas, sanatoria, parks and restaurants. The salty mud of the lake, in combination with the sea air and the sun, is highly recommended for poliomyelitis, arthritis and polyarthrititis, bringing back the joy of life to thousands of sufferers.

*Cape Kaliakra.* Kaliakra looms mightily on the horizon, a mere nine miles north of Balchik. It is a majestic, enchantingly beautiful cape jutting out sharply into the sea. The powerful fortress which, history teaches us, once existed on top of the rock, is now a shapeless ruin, and only chroniclers recall its legend.

Rising steeply out of the sea and over a mile long, wedge-shaped and with a level surface, Kaliakra must have been the ideal natural fortress. Inaccessible from the sea, which surrounds it on three sides, protected by a strong defensive wall on the narrow inland strip, it must have been unconquerable at the time when military technique was still at a rudimentary stage. The first to use Kaliakra as a fortress and hiding place for his treasures was Lisiniachos, one of Alexander the Great's generals. From the 3rd to the 5th century A.D. the cape was called Akra, and during the following centuries it became known as Kaliakra — «beautiful cape». In 1336 the fortress was captured by Amadeus of Savoy in his campaign against the Turks. Towards the end of the 14th century the Bulgarian feudal ruler Dobrotich transformed Kaliakra into a famous fortress, erecting a triple belt of walls and moats on the only inland access. The fortress was connected by underground tunnels with the harbour, where Dobrotich kept his fleet. But 1444 was the year of doom for Kaliakra. Persecuted by the Turkish hordes, the population of the Dobroudja province sought safety behind the fortress walls. The Bulgarians put up a stubborn fight. But they were a mere handful against the endless waves of Ottomans. The fortress fell, and the bold defenders perished to a man. Legend tells that only

40 pretty girls remained alive. And when the conquerors, intoxicated with their victory, set out to seize them, the girls clasped hands and jumped off the rock into the foaming sea. Since then, according to the legend, the fortress has been called «The Forty Maidens' Fortress.»

*Varna and Golden Sands.* Varna has long been known as the queen of the Black Sea. It is perhaps the most attractive of the resorts which gird the blue bosom of the Bulgarian sea. A city with a rich historic past, located in a luxuriant natural setting, a first-class resort where thousands of foreign tourists spend their summer vacation, Bulgaria's third-ranking city and an important industrial and cultural centre — this is Varna, a place where holidaymakers from many countries find splendid conditions for a most pleasant rest on the seaside.

The first local settlers were the Thracians. Towards the 6th century B. C. they were driven out by the Miletian Greeks who were quick to appreciate the excellent strategic location of the bay and became enamoured of its scenic beauty. The chroniclers of those distant days called Varna Odessos — the city of Odysseus. After its conquest by the Romans, the relatively large town became an important fortress. The ruins of a fortress tower to the south of the city still recall that distant epoch. After the appearance of the Bulgars on the Balkan Peninsula, Varna grew into a brisk, populous port, where merchant ships from distant lands cast anchor. The merchants of Venice and Ragusa (Dubrovnik) who traded here with the local population, had their own consular offices and residential and commercial districts in the town. In 1391 the town fell under Turkish domination. Half a century later, in 1444, the Polish King Vladislav III Varnenchik, who had come with a large army in order to liberate his enslaved Slav brothers, perished in battle near the town. In a small park, south of the city, there is now a mausoleum built as a memorial to Vladislav III Varnenchik. Under Ottoman rule Varna retained its first-class importance as a major port and commercial centre. As the Turkish 17th-century historian, Evliya Chelebi, reports, the harbour of Varna was packed with

vessels, freight carts and thousands of merchants: every year it was visited by some 1,500 large ships. The town was a strong fortress, protected by deep moats and redoubts; ruins of the fortress can still be seen today.

After Bulgaria's liberation in 1878 Varna entered a new period of progress. Connected with the interior by means of railway lines and beautiful roads, within a short time the city grew in size and population; many plants, factories and apartment houses were built, modern streets and squares were laid out.

Today Varna is a large, modern city with its own theatre, opera and symphony orchestra, a higher institute of learning as well as several technical schools and high schools, beautiful hotels and restaurants, and numerous attractive stores. In spring and autumn festivals of amateur art activity are held here: hundreds of amateur art groups from the surrounding towns and villages demonstrate their lively dances.

Varna is also an important administrative centre of a rich region, as well as a major industrial city. In addition to numerous works and factories, it can boast today of a dry dock, where Bulgarian and foreign ships undergo repairs. And in the Georgi Dimitrov Shipyard Bulgarian workers and engineers vie in craftsmanship with the ship-builders of old Europe. Several vessels, large and small, have already been built here, which today are floating on the seas and oceans under Bulgarian or foreign flags.

Varna has had a turbulent past, full of ups and downs, periods of splendour alternating with years of decline. Yet today it looks like a completely new city, with its attractive white buildings, clean asphalted streets and fresh greenery, with its lively commercial arteries, squares and boulevards, where countless buses connecting the city with the environs pass each other. One of its major attractions is the Sea Park, completely rebuilt in recent years, with its beautiful alleys, waterfalls and pavilions nestling among old hornbeams, ashes, poplars and cypresses, and with its modern casino. At the foot of this beautiful garden the municipal sea baths extend. On the broad sand strip of the beach thousands of holidaymakers take sun and sea baths in

summer, while the wide bay swarms with motor boats, sailing boats and other vessels.

The star of Varna has become particularly bright in recent years, with the emergence of the already famous new resorts Golden Sands and Varna Beach.

For the thousands of foreigners who have already spent a vacation at Golden Sands, this name has become synonymous with that of the French Riviera and of distant Florida.

Golden Sands and Varna Beach can be reached by boat or by bus or car along the picturesque coastal highway, lined with pretty trees and rose bushes. And when it gets dark, along the full length of the Varna-Golden Sands highway the fluorescent lights shine, giving it a most romantic fairy-tale appearance. The highway skirts the very seashore, which here is particularly picturesque, dotted with hundreds of villas, rest homes and hotels, where thousands of working people spend their summer vacation. The road passes through rich orchards and vineyards, which descend in terraces almost to the beaches.

Varna Beach is the older brother of Golden Sands, its history going back a decade, when the first modern hotels and restaurants were built alongside the already existing rest homes and sanatoria. Today Varna Beach has grown into a little town, with its many hotels, restaurants and casinos, set in a beautiful park. The new hotels represent a major achievement in national architecture: simple yet most attractive buildings, they harmoniously combine elements of old Bulgarian architecture with ultra-modern lines, and are equipped with every up-to-date convenience. Every hotel has its own beach, while the terrace-like restaurants look out over the wide sea.

Golden Sands lie a few miles further north, hidden by a barely noticeable little cape of the rocky coast. This resort has sprung up almost overnight during the past two or three years, created as if by the wand of a magician, yet today its fame has already spread far beyond the confines of Bulgaria. It has become a magnetic centre of attraction for thousands of visiting Germans, Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, Frenchmen, Swedes, Russians, and others. Within a couple of years 18 beautiful hotels have arisen here, with

many restaurants, coffee shops, casinos and bars, the whole steeped in the wonderful greenery of a virginal park, which is now being decorated with alleys, paths, pavilions and flower gardens. It was no mere whim that induced the architects to pick this particular spot for building this veritable architectural gem. As the very name of the resort implies, this part of the coast is famous for its fine beaches and gently sloping sand dunes, several miles long and more than a hundred yards wide, beyond which begins an old oak and linden forest. The Golden Sands belt adorns the inner arc of the spacious bay, at the northern tip of which Balchik lies.

This, our newest resort, has everything calculated to make the most exacting of modern tourists happy: hotels with their wide windows and terraces overlooking the sea, outdoor restaurants harmoniously adapted to their picturesque surroundings, flower paths, bars and dance floors with excellent orchestras, outdoor cinemas and theatres.

Above the colourful chain of hotels and restaurants, amid the old trees of the forest are scattered over 500 little bungalows for camping. Little paths lead across the forest to the famous Aladja Monastery, hewn from rock, or down to the beach.

Golden Sands is still in its infancy and continues to grow. Bulgarian architects are fired by the noble ambition to make the best possible use of the unique scenic beauty, formed by the rare combination of an old forest, wonderful beaches and a clear sea, in order to create a real seaside paradise with all modern conveniences for the many thousands of foreign tourists and holidaymakers who have already fallen in love with the azure blue of Bulgaria's Black Sea coast.

*Dikilitash — the Petrified Forest.* Some ten miles to the west of Varna lies one of the wonders of nature — Dikilitash, the «petrified forest». The road leading to this peculiar whim of nature winds around Shkorpil Hill, named after the archaeologist H. Shkorpil, who about half a century ago discovered the remains of a large ancient temple here. Under the altar of this temple the most precious archaeological find yet made in Bulgaria was unearthed: a golden

sarcophagus, adorned with precious stones and placed in a larger silver sarcophagus, which in turn was placed in a third sarcophagus made of alabaster. This exceedingly valuable find is now kept in the storerooms of the National Bank.

As you enter the hilly sands near the villages of Beloslav, Slunchevo, Banovo and Markovo, Dikilitash seems to pop out of the ground. Erect or halfway inclined, cylindrical, from three to ten feet thick and up to 16 feet tall, these stone columns stuck into the ground look like a veritable petrified forest, as the population in the vicinity calls it.

The «petrified forest» of Dikilitash, this strange whim of nature, had attracted the attention of travellers centuries ago. A number of geologists, among them the Englishman Captain Spratt (1854), have sought a scientific explanation for the origin of this petrified forest. However, it is only in our century that geologists have succeeded in discovering that Dikilitash is a phenomenon of the order of stalactites, produced in the course of millions of years in the lime-sand soil of this region.

The stems of this «petrified forest», under the action of the wind and of humidity, gradually crack and break up but this process is a very slow one. They should continue to adorn this part of Bulgaria for many thousands of years to come.

*Longoza — the Sunken Forest.* This region may be found on Bulgaria's map marked as a little blue widening-out of the mouth of the Kamchiya river; before flowing into the sea, the river spreads out into a wide lagoon, covered with dense growth which is almost tropical in character.

Many hypotheses were put forward by scientists until they finally solved the riddle and mystery of Longoza, this unique spot in the Balkan Peninsula, which differs sharply from the surrounding environment in its flora and fauna. Longoza represents a sunken strip of coastal land, submerged by the incoming sea waters. The inland bay was gradually clogged by sand alluvia, which the sea waves accumulated in front of the mouth, thus separating it from

the sea. Already half-closed, the bay was dammed by the abundant waters of the Kamchiya river which kept flowing into it. In the lowland thus produced, thanks to the abundant moisture, the rotting alluvium and the soft climate, a tall dense forest grew up. Here one can find tremendous, centuries-old elms, ashes, oaks, wild pears and unusually tall hawthorns. The powerful trunks of the trees and the tall, branch-like roots are interwoven with a dense network of wild vines, ivy, clematis and other herbs of the crowfoot family, which at places form an inaccessible, almost tropical thicket.

Through these veritable jungles, carrying its dense waters to the sea, quietly flows the Kamchiya. The ancient forest has formed a huge green arch above the river, which continues for miles, almost to the river mouth, and barely admits the sunlight through its dense green lacework.

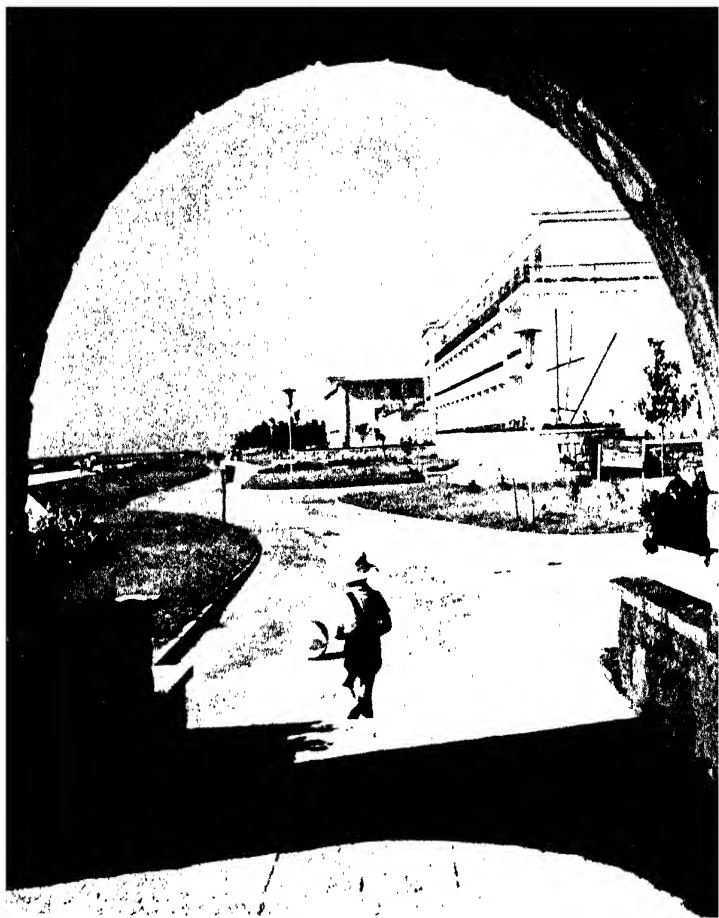
Longoza is accessible by rowboat for five miles inland from the mouth.

In spring Longoza is truly enchanting; but it is also terrible for its numerous forest-dwellers. When the snows begin to melt, the Kamchiya overflows its banks and floods the entire lowland. Longoza then turns into a veritable sunken forest, exquisitely beautiful but inaccessible across its entire width of from two to three miles and along its length of about 25 miles all the way to its mouth at the sea.

Wide and full of water, Kamchiya was a waterway as early as Roman times. In the Middle Ages, the Bulgarian Tsar Ivan Assen II, and after him Dobrotich, established shipyards here.

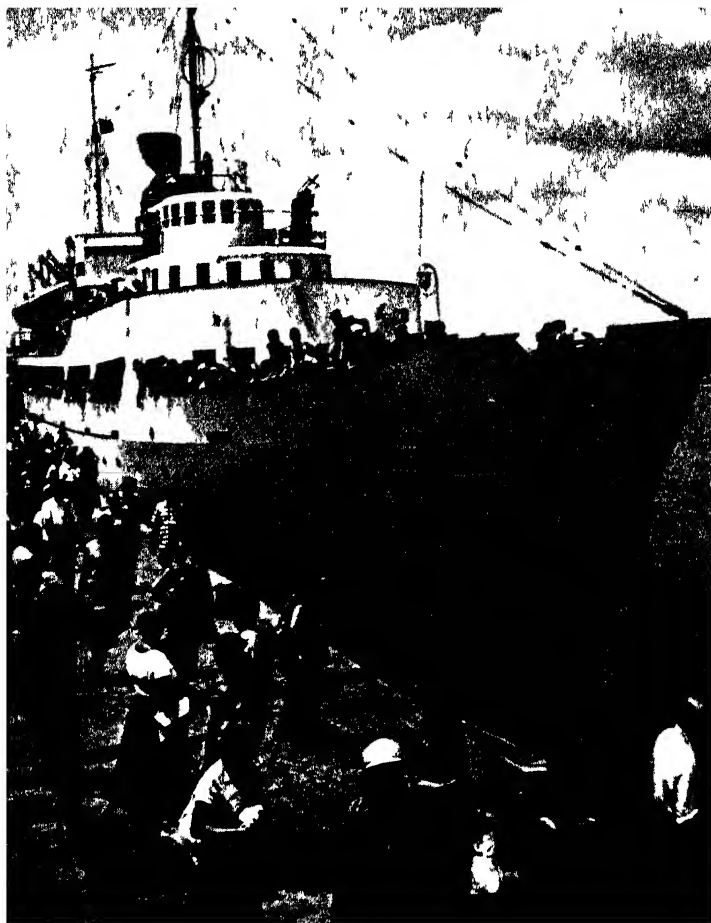
*Obzor.* Obzor is the only Bulgarian resort which harmoniously combines the sea and the mountain. Whereas its eastern end almost reaches the sand belt of the beach, its western outskirts disappear in the cool approaches of the Balkan mountains which extend all the way to the sea.

It is a very popular resort, frequented by many thousands every year. Until noon the holidaymakers fill the wide beach with its fine-grained sand, while in the afternoon and evening they take walks in the mountain forest.



*Two of the scores of new hotels on the picturesque  
shores of Golden Sands*

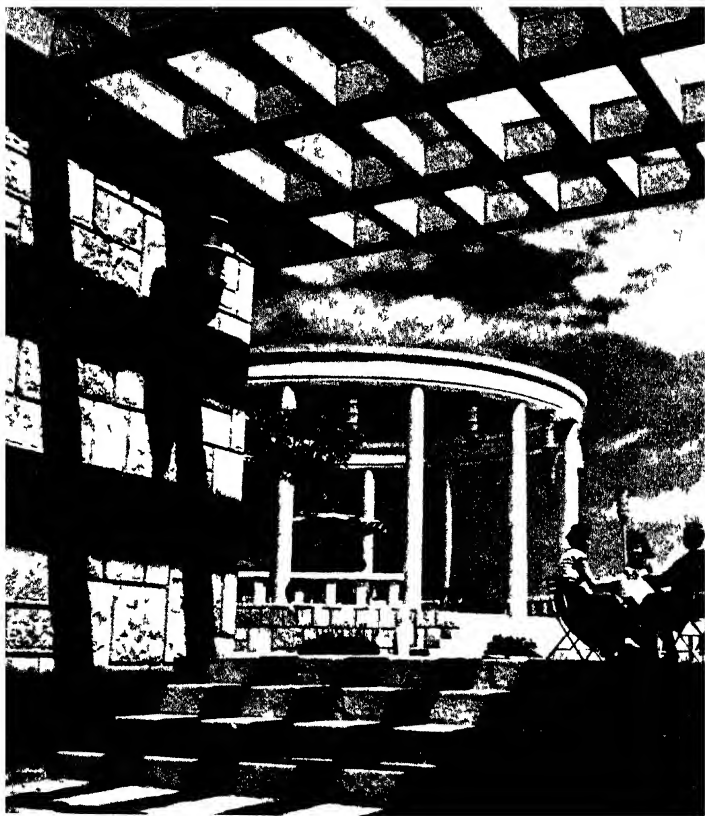




*From passenger ships travel down the Black Sea coast in summer*



*Varna view of the city's central beach*



*Terrace of the tea room at Golden Sands the new resort near Var*

*From the hotels at Golden Sands there is a wonderful view of the*

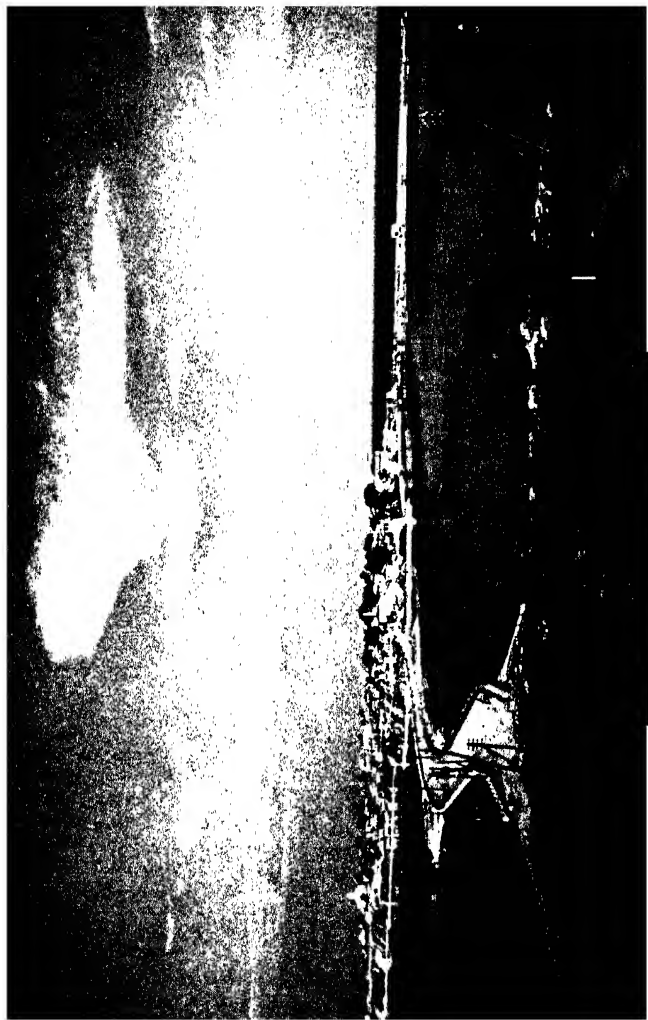




*Early morning on the beach*



*Through the cool water on the way to a favourite haunt*



*View of Nebraska*

Obzor attracts tourists and holidaymakers, not only because of its wonderful natural setting and unique sea-mountain climate; it also presents considerable interest to historians and archaeologists, for in its environs there are a number of monuments, mute witnesses of bygone civilizations.

The first settlers here were the ancient Greek navigators, who were attracted by the picturesque shore. In Roman times Obzor became a key fortress on the maritime route from Constantinople by Odessos (Varna) to the Danube delta. It then had many impressive public buildings, a temple of Jupiter, parks, squares and streets, a water main, and a thick fortress wall. In the Middle Ages a Bulgarian ruler built a mighty citadel here, the remains of which can still be seen in the vicinity.

Today Obzor is coming into its own again, this time, however, as an attractive resort town. It has clean streets and beautiful villas and houses, whose spacious courtyards are bathed in the bright greenery of fruit trees and flower gardens in summer. New rest homes, restaurants and villas spring up here every year, making Obzor one of the most lively and popular of Black Sea resorts.

*Nessebur.* Before reaching Nessebur, the boat coming from Varna has to circumnavigate Cape Eminé, a promontory jutting into the sea which is second only in size to Cape Kaliakra on the Bulgarian coast. Eminé is the last crest of the powerful Balkan chains to the east.

The boat stays clear of this cape, for hundreds of yards around it the sea foams over treacherous underwater rocks, on which in bygone centuries many a vessel has suffered shipwreck. Today the lighthouse, rising from the top of Cape Eminé, warns ships from afar to stay at a distance. Once upon a time, instead of the present lighthouse there used to rise a majestic temple of Jupiter, the foundations of which were discovered recently, as well as an old fortress which guarded the sea route.

Just as the ship navigates this cape and begins to steer south-westward, Nessebur emerges out of the waves like a water nymph.



A small peninsula, with little old wooden houses, built centuries ago, heaped upon it, with narrow, cobblestoned streets, over which the projecting eaves of the houses form a vault, a town with 42 old churches from medieval times, an islet connected with the mainland by a 300-yard isthmus which during sea storms is submerged by the waves — this is Nessebur, one of the most picturesque Black Sea resorts of Bulgaria.

Once upon a time, centuries and milleniums ago, Nessebur became in turn an ancient Greek colony, a Roman, Byzantine and Bulgarian fortress; protected on all sides by the sea and high fortress walls, Nessebur was well-nigh unconquerable. The centre of a rich county where fruits, vines and vegetables thrive and, at the same time, a strategic harbour and natural fortress, Nessebur was already in the most remote times a brisk fishing, viticultural and commercial centre with a big shipyard. The town went through periods of great prosperity, particularly in the Middle Ages, when the overthrown Byzantine emperors and defeated claimants to the throne were banned from its shores.

Today Nessebur has been proclaimed a museum-town and is, at the same time, one of the most beautiful Bulgarian Black Sea resorts. The medieval churches, some of which are still pretty well preserved, have a striking architecture and complex mosaic stone ornamentation, representing a most interesting objective for scientific excavations and excursions. To the south of the isthmus along the sea-shore stretches a bow-shaped bright yellow beach, about a mile and a quarter long, behind which rise sand dunes such as are found nowhere else in these parts. The dunes spread inward, forming a regular little desert. Just off the beach there are several trade union rest homes and hotels, offering every convenience for a pleasant and rewarding vacation. There is another inland beach, which until recently was quite abandoned, but has now been put into proper shape. Hundreds of cosy villas and a modern hotel have recently been built here.

Holidaymakers who prefer to spend their vacation in the quaint little medieval town, in the old houses with their

projecting eaves and woodcarved ceilings, can rent rooms there.

*Pomorié.* Situated south-west of Nessebur, Pomorié is perched on a rocky peninsula, protecting the big salt lagoon which is called Pomorié Lake from the sea.

The town can look back on a history stretching over 25 centuries. For many a generation the life of the local fishermen has been connected with the sea, and the town is an important centre of fishing and salt production. Under its old historic name of Anhialo, Pomorié formed part of the Roman Empire, and later of the Byzantine Empire. Frequently it was burned down and destroyed, passing now into the hands of the Bulgarians, now into the hands of the Byzantines, but always it rose anew from the ashes, and throughout the long centuries of its existence the town has been an important commercial and strategic centre.

Its key location on the Bay of Bourgas made Pomorié already in olden times an important strategic fortress and a brisk commercial centre. A mere eight decades ago it was still larger and more thriving than Bourgas.

Pomorié is one of Bulgaria's foremost spas. Special barges bring from Pomorié Lake curative black mud, which is oily and adhesive and has a strong odour of hydrogen sulphide. A modern mud bath has been built in the immediate vicinity of the lake, catering for some 1,000 patients a day. The Pomorié mud is highly recommended for ailments of the organs of movement, arthritis and polyarthritis, poliomyelitis, sciatica, gynaecological and skin diseases.

A picturesque peninsula, richly indented with numerous little bays, relieved by capes and terraces, famous for its wine and grapes and a centre of ancient civilization, Pomorié presents considerable interest as a place of historic and scientific value, while its fine beaches and curative mud make it a popular resort and highly valued spa.

*Bourgas.* Lying in the centre of Bulgaria's largest bay on the Black Sea, Bourgas is a relative newcomer among its many historic rivals. As a matter of fact, it was only after Bulgaria's liberation, during the closing decades of last

century, that it grew into a town, when a harbour began to be built here, as well as storehouses for the export of grain, fruit and vegetables from Thrace and the whole of South Bulgaria. Within less than half a century Bourgas emerged as a modern commercial, industrial and cultural centre, the nation's 5th-ranking city and the foremost seaport.

Through Bourgas Bulgaria markets abroad the wealth of its soil — tobacco, fruit and pulses. Through Bourgas it exports the products of its young industry to scores of countries. In that modern harbour day and night the freight cranes creak, servicing ships which have come from all parts of the world.

Bourgas' economic developoment has been fairly rapid. There is a steady increase in the number of plants turning out machinery, waggons and electrical materials, of factories processing the salt obtained from the lagoons and the sea, of fish and other canneries, sugar refineries, etc.

Bourgas, however, is not only an industrial centre. In a short time it has grown up into a first-class resort city with beautiful hotels, restaurants and stores, and clean, busy streets. Modern baths have been built on its spacious beach, which attract thousands of holidaymakers every year. The coast rising high above the sea has been fortified with decorative vegetation and terrace-shaped flower gardens, which are connected with the Sea Park. The city is the only Black Sea resort which can boast of a curative greyish black sand, rich in iron compounds. Recently a modern balneosanatorium was built in the vicinity of the city.

*Sozopol.* Sozopol is an ancient town, dating back to the days of Greek splendour. In antiquity a giant 40-ft. bronze statue of Apollo rose on the little, rocky St. Cyril island, which almost touches the peninsula of Sozopol, giving its original name to the locality — Apollonia. In 72 B. C. the Roman General Marc Lucullus carried off the statue and placed it in Rome's Capitol. Decades elapsed and the town, inhabited by energetic fishermen and merchants, expanded and founded its own colonies, one of which was Anhialo — today's Pomorié. Later the town was renamed

Sozopol — the city of salvation. Sozopol's history has been a turbulent one: a brisk commercial, viticultural and fishing town, it changed hands many a time in the Middle Ages, with Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire as the main protagonists. According to the chroniclers, Sozopol maintained close trade relations with some of the Italian city republics — Venice and Genoa.

Today Sozopol is Bulgaria's foremost fishing centre. The catch is particularly rich in this region, including grey mullet, bullheads, turbot, sea swallows and especially mackerel, sardines and belted bonitos, and last but not least — dolphins.

Sozopol, however, is not only a fishing town. From the early cloudless summer days until late into autumn when the colours of the sea grow pale, hundreds of artists paint the ancient island. The quaint wooden houses, with their centuries-old patina, their twisted eaves jutting out on the streets, their bright red roofs glistening under the silken blue sky, and their enchanting background of picturesque sea rocks, coloured red and yellow, are a painter's dream. There is hardly a Bulgarian artist who has not tried his brush at this magnificent setting. Many a picture, reproducing with much love the poetry of sunny Sozopol, can be found in the nation's art exhibits and galleries as well as in the possession of art lovers. On the golden sands of Sozopol's numerous beaches you can meet adult men and women, whose love for this romantic town has not faded with the years, ever since they spent their first vacation here.

Sozopol has a population of 3,000, which during the summer season jumps to 8,000 and more. The new inhabitants are the loyal Sozopol fans, who live in the quaint houses with the eaves, in the rooms with carved wooden ceilings, or on the opposite hill, in the new Harmani district where scores of new red-brick houses and villas with little gardens — typical Bulgarian dwellings — spring up every year. Behind them extends the emerald belt of vegetable gardens, vineyards, and fig trees.

No other Bulgarian Black Sea resort can vie with Sozopol in the number of beaches. At the bottom of the northern bay lies the white dune strip of the Republican beach, which

is over a mile long. The municipal beach is on the southern bay, between the old and new parts of the town. It has fine sand with a bluish hue, while the sea in the bay is transparent like crystal. On the other side of the Harmani district there is another bay, another beach with blinding white sand. A bit further to the south lies the rocky Korenyata lagoon, calm, round and blue like a big eye. Still further south stretches the 3-mile long almost virginal Kavatsi beach. Behind every hillock the sea smiles gaily and the surf draws snow-white laces of foam along the sands of new beaches. And thus it continues all the way to the famous Ropotamo river, some ten miles south of Sozopol.

*Ropotamo River.* At the mouth of the Ropotamo river the shore is a colourful tracery of fig forests and short-stem vines which grow in the very sands of the gently sloped dunes.

The Ropotamo is only some 15 miles long. Taking its source in the Strandja mountains, the river gradually expands on its short course to the sea into a majestic mouth. Because of the soil erosion and the blocking of the mouth by alluvium, the river is very wide when approaching the sea and about 20 feet deep.

Ships coming here have to stop at a short distance from the mouth; the trip up the river can be effected only by boat.

Ropotamo, a virginal forest of branchy platans, oaks and cornel trees, densely interwoven with ivy and clematis, girds the immovable course of the river, casting a dense shade on its quiet waters. Playful fish leap across the green water, hiding in the depths, frightened by the shadows of fish-eating birds. The famous water lilies of the Ropotamo, snow-white, with their green leaves as soft as velvet slightly opened, slowly float on the water, driven by the waves and the wind. Majestic stillness, the quiet of a wonderful natural setting seldom disturbed by man, golden seahorses whose little wings glisten in the air, the songs of birds and the tart salty aroma of the sea which wafts hither freely under the river's green vault — that is Ropotamo in

the sultry July days, when nature seethes with turbulent intoxication.

*Primorsko, Kiten, Michurin and Ahtopol.* To the south of Sozopol, after passing the picturesque Oily Cape, stretches the last strip of Bulgaria's Black Sea coast. For almost 20 miles, all the way to the Turkish frontier, the Bulgarian shore again reveals exquisitely beautiful, calm mountain landscapes, fascinating quiet bays and lagoons, pretty villages and towns steeped in the dense greenery of vines, figs, almonds and oranges, and an amber necklace of beaches, succeeding one another to the very frontier, such as are found nowhere else on the Bulgarian shore.

Until recently this unusually beautiful section of Bulgaria's Black Sea coast was practically unknown. The lovers of the sea preferred the central resorts and localities, where natural beauty is combined with comfort. During the past few years, however, this part of the coast was literally conquered by thousands of holidaymakers, who boldly sacrificed the comforts of modern hotels and restaurants in the other Black Sea resorts in order to enjoy the new experience of an almost virginal natural setting with its wonderful beaches, enchanting bays and lagoons, somnolent landscapes drowsing under the bright sun, and a sea blue and clear like a tear. Of course, these pioneer tourists are welcomed with open arms by the hospitable inhabitants of Primorsko, Kiten, Michurin and Ahtopol, who ensure them food and lodging.

The state, ever alert for any opportunity to tap the nation's manifold riches, is soon going to build modern hotels and restaurants here too, as well as asphalt roads, so that many thousands will be able to enjoy this blissful newly discovered region on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.



## HISTORY

*The Earliest Settlers.* The oldest traces of man in the lands now inhabited by Bulgarians are the crude tools found in the Bacho Kiro cave near Dryanovo Monastery. These date back to the secondary Paleolithic period (100,000-40,000 B. C.). More numerous have been the finds made in various places in Bulgaria which throw light on the late Paleolithic period and especially on the Stone and Bronze Age (1900-800 B. C.). Of particular interest are the hill settlements of that period, with their clay vessels adorned



*Sozopol with the sea*





*Nissebur an ancient church and the sea*

with various ornaments, bone and marble idols, and other objects.

In the early part of the Bronze Age the Thracians settled in the eastern half of the Balkan Peninsula, [attaining quite a high civilization. The Bulgarian lands were then inhabited primarily by the tribes of the Moesians, Getae, Triballi, Serdae, Bessi and Odrysae, who lived mostly in villages but had also fortified towns. Recently the Thracian town of Seuthopolis, named after the Odrysian ruler Seuthes (4th century B. C.), was discovered near Kazanluk. Its 7-foot-thick fortress wall surrounded an area of about 12 acres. The town was well laid out and had an agora, a temple of the great Thracian gods and a temple of Dionysus. Outside the fortress lay the suburbs, with miserable little dwelling places.

The Thracians were good land cultivators and prided themselves on their stockbreeding. Homer extolled them as horsebreeders, while Hesiod called Thrace «the land of horses». Ore mining and metal-working were highly developed. This is borne out by the rich finds made in Bulgaria during the excavation of tumuli as well as by the well-preserved Thracian chariot discovered recently near the village of Shishkovtsi, Kyustendil district. The Thracians were also past masters in the manufacture of gold and silver vessels and ornaments. Precious discoveries of the goldsmith's art include the treasure found at Vulchi Trun, Pleven district, and the recently discovered treasures near Loukovit and Panagyurishtë. These treasures reveal a high degree of artistic craftsmanship. The Panagyurishtë treasure, now in the Plovdiv Museum, is one of the largest in the world. It consists of nine richly ornamented vessels made of pure gold.

The Thracians had many gods. They held the god Heroi in particular esteem. He was the Thracian horseman who was represented on the sacred stone slabs, which are found by the thousands in Bulgaria. The Thracians also believed in life after death. They buried their notables in tumuli, such as are found all over Bulgaria.

Other important monuments of Thracian architecture are the dome-shaped tomb at the village of Mezek, Haskovo

district, and the particularly important tomb which was discovered accidentally near Kazanluk in 1944. The latter is the only dome-shaped tomb so far discovered with decorative wall-paintings of contemporary figures, executed with unusual mastery, making it a unique monument of ancient art, and the only one with completely preserved frescos from the Hellenistic period which has come down to us.

The Thracians were fond of music, songs and merriment. They enjoyed a high reputation as singers and instrument players. The semi-mythical Thracian Orpheus, the most famous singer of antiquity, was held by them in particular esteem. Orpheus is said to have lived and roamed in the Rhodope mountains, called by the people the Orpheic Forests. The language of the Thracians has not come down to us, because they had no script of their own.

The tribal order of the Thracians began to decline towards the 7th-6th century B. C. The process of class differentiation was accelerated by the newly established Greek colonies on the Black Sea coast: Apollonia (Sozopol), Anhialo (Pomorié), Messemvriya (Nessebur), Odessos (Varna) and Dionysopolis (Balchik). These developed into lively commercial and artisan centres and contributed greatly to the establishment of the slave system among the Thracians. This, in turn, led to the creation of the first Thracian state by the Odrysae tribe, with Ouskodana (Adrianople) as capital. In the 4th century B. C. the Macedonian ruler Philip II, and after him his son Alexander the Great, conquered this state and subjected most of the Thracian tribes. Their rule, however, lasted only half a century. After stubborn struggles the Thracians regained their independence, but were unable to unite for joint defence against attacks from the outside. The Scythians, Celts and Sarmatians penetrated their land.

*Roman Domination.* Taking advantage of the weakness and mutual feuds of the Greeks and the Thracian tribes, the Romans succeeded in conquering the whole Balkan Peninsula in 46 A. D. The establishment of the strong Roman rule, based on the slave system, put an end to disunity and enmity among the Thracian tribes. In order to consolidate

their hold over the conquered territories, the Romans built roads, towns and fortresses. The most important Roman settlements were Serdica (Sofia), Nicopolis ad Istrum (Nikyup), Oescus (Gigen) and Trimontium (Plovdiv).

In the 3rd-4th century the Roman Empire began to decline. The wars came to an end and with it the influx of slaves. As a result, the slave-owners were compelled to free the slaves, the better to utilize their labour, and they turned them into colonii by giving them small plots of land and tying them to the soil. But even this transition to new and more progressive feudal relations could not save the Empire from its doom. Strongly shaken by the slave revolts and no longer able to stave off the barbarian invasions — of the Quadi, Marcomanni and Yazyges from the west and the Ostrogoths, Huns and Visigoths from the east, it finally fell to pieces.

Between 395 and 410 the Roman Empire was split into two parts — an Eastern part, later called the Byzantine Empire with Constantinople as capital, and the Western Empire with Rome as capital.

The Byzantine Empire, sprawled over two continents, preserved the peculiar features of the Roman economy and continued to exist for a thousand years after the fall of the Western Empire in 476.

The barbarian invasions, which lasted almost three centuries, led to radical ethnic changes in the Balkan Peninsula. Part of the local population disappeared, another part mingled with the numerous invaders — Celts, Sarmatians, Goths — but the great majority remained Thracians, some of whom were Hellenized or Latinized, but most of whom preserved their original ethnic character. The Byzantine Empire exerted a strong cultural and political influence, melting the different barbarian tribal groups which had penetrated its confines. The Byzantine influence, however, did not succeed in assimilating the Slavs and Bulgars.

*Founding of a Slav-Bulgarian State.* The Slavs, whose descendents are today's Bulgarians, began their first invasions of the Byzantine Empire in the late 5th and early 6th century. They gradually destroyed the Byzantine

rule in the Balkan Peninsula and settled down in the conquered lands.

The Slavs were divided into tribes and lived in villages. Their chief occupation was agriculture, but they were also good cattle-breeders, bee-keepers, smiths and carpenters.

The Slavs cherished their liberty, lived under democratic institutions, and settled down peaceably. But when attacked by an enemy, they fought with great courage. They were polytheists, but Peroun, the god of thunder, was held in the highest esteem. In the 6th century they had reached the stage of so-called military democracy, the final stage of the disintegrating tribal order. In the 7th century the Slavs occupied most of the Balkan Peninsula, where with their tribal system and free communes they contributed to the destruction and abolition of the prevailing slave system and to the transition towards the feudal system.

In the 7th century, when the process of class differentiation had been completed, the Slavs created their own state organizations — the tribal union of the seven Slav tribes in North Bulgaria, the tribal unions of South Macedonia and in North Greece.

*The Bulgars.* The early Bulgarians or Bulgars, who were of Turanian origin, penetrated at that time into the Balkan Peninsula. Led by Khan Asparouh, they moved down south-west from the Northern Caucasus where they had lived, smashed the Byzantine armies at the Danube delta in 680 and settled in what is now the Dobroudja. After establishing contact with the local Slav aristocracy, in 681 they laid the foundations of the new Slav-Bulgarian state. Asparouh launched new attacks against the Byzantine Empire, compelling Emperor Constantine IV to conclude a peace treaty with the Bulgars and to pay them tribute. In this manner the newly-created state, which was subsequently to be called Bulgaria, received indirect recognition. Pliska became the capital of the new state, which stretched from the Black Sea in the east to the lands beyond the Isker river in the west, and from the Balkan mountains in the south to the trans-Danubian territories in the north, i. e. roughly it comprised the northern half

of present-day Bulgaria with a strip of Rumanian boundary territory. The social and political system of the new state was that of early feudalism with two basic classes — free peasantry and land aristocracy. The peasants rented the land from the aristocracy and gradually began to lose their independence. The ruler, who was called the Khan, was in charge of state affairs, relying on a state council which was composed of Slav and Bulgar aristocrats. Asparouh became supreme ruler and the Bulgar aristocracy won a preponderant influence. Among the Slavs and the Bulgars, who differed in origin, language and creed, a process of assimilation set in, which continued for almost two centuries and ended in the predomination of the numerically much stronger Slav elements.

The new state expanded rapidly, attaining an early apogee under Khan Kroum (803-814) who, after waging successful wars against the Avars to the west, extended its frontiers to the Tissa river and the Carpathians. In 809 Kroum launched a campaign to the south, conquered Sofia and threatened Thrace and Macedonia. He won a brilliant victory in 811 at the Vurbitsa pass, completely routing the Byzantine army whose supreme chief, Emperor Nicephoros I, fell in battle.

Khan Kroum is the first Bulgarian law-giver. His successors continued his policy of aggrandizement throughout the 9th century. Bulgaria soon emerged as a major political force on the Balkan Peninsula.

During this early period, 7th-9th century, the old Bulgarian state attained a high stage of civilization. Architecture flourished. The buildings of the ruling class had a monumental character: they were spacious and of solid make, showing that the builders had drawn on the local traditions inherited from the past. Of particular interest are the excavations of the Large Palace with the throne hall and of the Small Palace in Pliska, which were probably built under the reign of Omourtag (814-831). A bridge was built over the Ticha (Kamchiya) river, and palaces rose on its shores as well as on the banks of the Danube.

Interesting stone inscriptions about major events, treaties and other matters have been left from those days at

Chatalare, Turnovo, Kolarovgrad and elsewhere. But the most impressive monument of that period is the famous Madara horseman, carved on a high rock 75 feet above its base, near Madara, Kolarovgrad district; it is the only rock relief in Europe. The relief represents a horseman, holding a lance in his right hand, with which he is piercing a lion, and a cup in his left. A greyhound is running after the horseman. On its side the relief bears inscriptions, in which the names of several Bulgarian rulers are mentioned. All are written in the Greek script.

*The Establishment of Feudalism.* There existed embryonic feudal relationships in the Slav-Bulgarian state from its very inception. These relationships gradually developed and in the 9th century feudalism became the dominant system. The protracted wars, internecine strife, heavy taxes and abuses of the aristocracy brought havoc and ruin to the peasantry. The large landowners, later known as boyars, supported the ruler in his policy, which was aimed at the consolidation of the unity of the state, at keeping the serfs in subordination, and at defending the country from foreign invasions.

*Adoption of Christianity.* The adoption of Christianity as the state religion under the reign of Tsar Boris (853-889) was due to a number of factors. This religion, advocating the divine origin of worldly rule and unconditional subordination to the rulers, appeared as a most appropriate instrument for the ideological consolidation of the feudal order. No less important were the foreign political considerations which prompted the introduction of the new religion into Bulgaria. Bulgaria was then a pagan island in a Christian world, alien to its cultural acquisitions and exposed to the constant attempts of the Christian countries to subject it to their cultural influence. In 865 Christianity became the official religion of Bulgaria.

The adoption of Christianity was an important and progressive historic act. It enabled the then most advanced social system, feudalism, to consolidate itself and the Bulgarian nationality to take shape. Bulgaria could now partake

of the cultural acquisitions of the other countries. The power of the Bulgarian ruler was strengthened. At the same time, the new religion opened the way for Byzantine influence to penetrate into Bulgaria. Greek priests began to infiltrate the country. Through religion and language the Byzantine Empire strove to impose its influence and rule on Bulgaria. This made it necessary to create an independent church. Gravitating between the two rival churches, that of Rome and that of Constantinople, Boris succeeded in 870 in obtaining a decision from the Church Council of Constantinople, granting Bulgaria spiritual autonomy and an archbishop of its own.

*Emergence and Spread of the Slav Script.* Bulgaria, like most other Slav countries, was exposed to the aggressive attempts of the Byzantines to the south and of the German tribes to the north-west. These attempts were facilitated by the spread of foreign literature. The creation of a script of their own was, therefore, a matter of self-preservation for the Slavs. In Bulgaria a Slav script was highly necessary in order to explain the teaching of Christ in a comprehensible language, to serve the new feudal economy, and to create a native culture.

The answer to these Slav requirements, which had now matured, was given by the Slav brothers Cyril and Methodius. In 855 they coined the Slav alphabet and, with the aid of their pupils, translated the most important church books into the Slav tongue.

The first to expel the Catholic priests was the Moravian ruler Rostislav, who thereupon approached Constantinople for clergymen who would preach among the people in the Slav language. Cyril and Methodius were sent to Moravia, and accomplished much in the field of enlightenment in a short time.

The Slav script rapidly spread throughout Bulgaria as well. This was due in large measure to three of the oldest pupils of the two brothers — Kliment, Naoum and Angelari. Arriving in Pliska from Great Moravia via Belgrade in 886, they were cordially welcomed by the Bulgarian ruler Boris who did all in his power to facilitate their pioneer

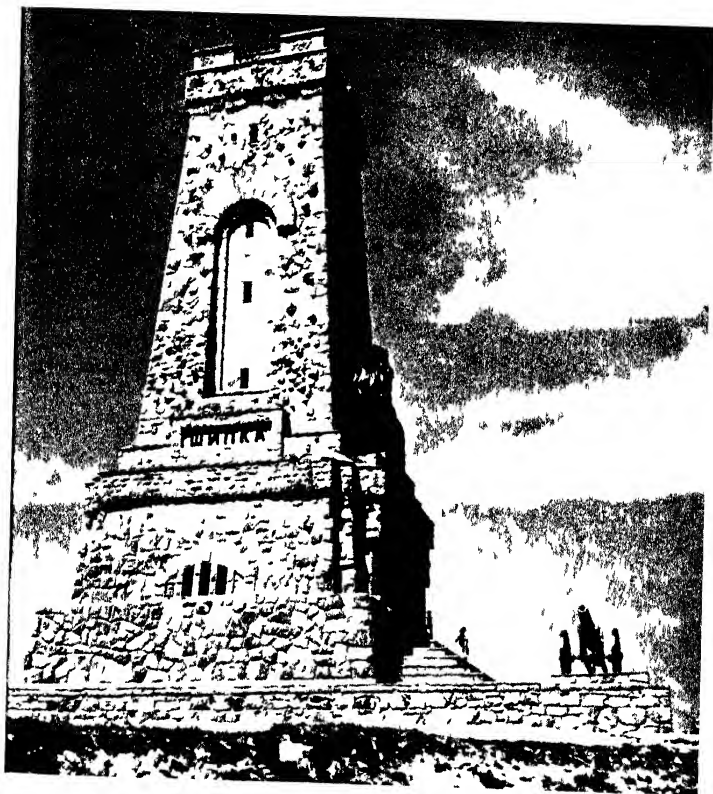


work. The fruits were not slow in coming. Bulgaria became the centre of the Slav script and culture. The Greek language was done away with, and all inscriptions and titles were written in the Slav language. A rich official literature in the Slav language made its appearance, followed by an apocryphal literature. In this respect the Bulgarian people were ahead of the nations of Western Europe whose books were written in Latin only and were not accessible to the masses.

The appearance of a Slav script is an event of exceptional importance in the history of the Slavs. In essence it is a highly humanistic, democratic, progressive and revolutionary development. Dealing a blow to trilingual domination, it became a powerful instrument for the self-determination and independence of nations. Thanks to this alphabet and to the books now written in a language accessible to them, the Slav masses had access to the cultural achievements of their time. This enabled them to adopt a critical attitude towards social and political iniquities and to fight against their class and national oppressors. That is why it was among the Slavs that the first development occurred of religious movements with such a pronounced social undertone as that of the Bogomils in Bulgaria, of the Strigolniks in Russia, and of the Hussites in Bohemia — movements which were directed against political oppression, social injustice and religious hypocrisy. Nowhere else, incidentally, did these movements assume such a mass character.

The work of Cyril and Methodius set the cornerstone of Slav literature and civilization, proclaiming the idea of the unity of the Slav peoples.

*Political Might and Cultural Flowering.* Under the reign of Tsar Simeon (893-927) Bulgaria attained its greatest might, becoming the foremost power on the Balkan Peninsula. This was also a period of cultural flowering. The then prevailing conditions were particularly propitious for such an upsurge. Feudalism was consolidated, state power was strongly centralized, the long assimilation process had resulted in the emergence of one nationality. The boyars disposed of great wealth and power, while Simeon was a



*The monument on Mount Shipka in the Balkan Range where Bulgarian volunteers and Russian soldiers defended the pass in the Russian Turkish War for the Liberation of Bulgaria*



*September, 1944 an old Bulgarian, who has lived to see freedom, offers a Soviet soldier a glass of brandy by way of welcome*



*Soviet Army Liberator Memorial Sofia*



*An amphora, part of the Thracian golden treasure  
(Archaeological Museum, Plovdiv)*

wise ruler with a fine education obtained in Constantinople, a bold warrior and statesman. He waged a long struggle against the Byzantine Empire with the intention of smashing it and subjecting it entirely. After a number of brilliant victories, he proclaimed himself in 919 «Tsar of Bulgarians and Greeks» and proclaimed the Bulgarian church completely independent from the Byzantine church. Bulgaria comprised at that time almost the entire Balkan Peninsula, and preserved large Slav masses, which had long lived under Byzantine rule, from denationalization.

The epoch of Simeon is known as «the golden century of Bulgarian letters». The aristocracy had grown opulent as a result of the country's territorial expansion, the masses were imbued with a heightened national feeling as a result of the victorious wars, the faith in the forces and talents of the Slavs had become strong. All these factors contributed to the rapid cultural progress of the country, to the creation of material and spiritual values. Preslav, Bulgaria's capital, was an important centre of culture. Two fortress walls of stone with turrets surrounded the town, which boasted of gorgeous palaces, churches and other public and private buildings. In the inner city a royal palace with a throne hall has been discovered, the exterior faced with marble and the interior with gold and silver. Near the palace, in the southern part of the outer city, was the so-called Golden Church, a remarkable architectural monument with wonderful plastic and interior decoration. This is what the ancient Bulgarian writer, Yoan Exarch, has to say in his Hexameron (Six Days): «Whenever some poor foreigner coming from afar stopped in front of the walls of the outer city and looked at it, he was amazed. On entering the city, he saw on both sides buildings, coloured in stone and decorated with wood. Advancing further into the inner city, he saw high palaces and churches adorned with stones and wood in various colours and on the inside with marble and copper, silver and gold. Never having seen anything like this, for he knew only thatched huts, he would not know what to compare it with. . . But if he happened to see the tsar, sitting in bejewelled garments, with a necklace of gold coins around his neck and bracelets on his

arms, with a velvet belt around his waist and a gold dagger hanging on his side, flanked on both sides by sitting boyars with golden necklaces, bracelets and girdles, and if somebody had asked him on his return home what he had seen in that foreign land, he would have answered: 'I have no words to tell you; you must go and see with your own eyes to really appreciate this unique beauty'...»

But it was not only material culture that flourished. Spiritual culture too — and especially literature — attained dizzy heights. The capital was a lively literary and cultural centre, where such prominent writers as Yoan Exarch, Konstantin Preslavski, Chernorizets Hrabur (The Monk Hrabur), Presbyter Grigori, and many others lived and worked. They continued the literary traditions of the pupils of Cyril and Methodius. Yoan Exarch, one of the most distinguished writers of the School of Preslav, was a contemporary and collaborator of Simeon. He has left us many translations, among them the famous Hexameron, which also contains original parts interpolated by the author himself. Bishop Konstantin is the first Bulgarian poet, the author of the «Alphabet Prayer» and «Foreword to the Gospel», in which the joy of the Slavs to possess a script of their own finds expression. The writer sings a hymn of praise to education, which permits «the blind to see, the deaf to hear the written word». In Chernorizets Hrabur's «On Letters» the trilingual theory is rejected with rare ingenuity and polemical talent and the Slav script's right to existence is demonstrated. The official literature of that period was religious and aristocratic, but objectively it played a progressive role, for it helped to turn Bulgaria into a centre of Slav culture, considerably stimulating the cultural progress of Slav and non-Slav nations.

Along with the official literature, an apocryphal (secret) literature sprang up in the 10th century. The apocrypha aimed at satisfying the thirst for knowledge of the masses and, in an accessible and acceptable form, to offer them an explanation of a number of problems, the solution of which they could not find in the dry, shackled, official, religious literature. In some apocrypha one senses the discontent of the oppressed masses and their hatred for the ruling circles.

An unknown author of apocrypha reserves a place in hell for kings and patriarchs. Although the lay and church authorities prohibited and banned these apocrypha, they enjoyed considerable popularity among the people.

Both the official and the apocryphal literature contributed to the spread of the Slav language, to the moulding of a Bulgarian nationality, welded by the new education and culture. They exerted a beneficial influence on the neighbouring countries and, in particular, on Kiev Russia. A number of apocrypha somehow found their way to that country and were widely circulated among the population. «The Law on the Judgement of Men» and a number of other works were brought to Russia, helping to develop and consolidate Slav culture in that fraternal country.

*Resistance to Feudal Oppression: The Bogomils.* The plight of the peasants in Bulgaria grew steadily worse throughout the 10th century. They were attached to the land, and the labour services and tax burden became ever more unbearable. As a result, among the oppressed peasantry and the poorer town dwellers there grew up a strong movement against the oppressors — tsar, boyars and upper clergy — which was called the Bogomil movement after its founder. In the 10th century this movement spread like wildfire throughout Bulgaria and well beyond its confines. Although religious in form, it was social and economic in essence. Democratic, progressive and revolutionary for its times, the Bogomil movement strongly shook the feudal order through its critical doctrine.

The authorities and the church proclaimed the Bogomils heretics and subjected them to persecution. But no terror could stifle this popular movement, because the causes that had given rise to it were not removed.

From Bulgaria the Bogomil movement spread to the Byzantine Empire, Serbia and Bosnia, from whence it penetrated to Italy and Southern France, where the Bogomils were respectively known as Cathars and Albigenses. This powerful anti-feudal popular movement in the early part of the Middle Ages, the first of its kind, dealt a telling blow to the established order, fanned the fighting spirit



of the masses and became a source of inspiration in their struggles against their oppressors.

*Bulgaria's Fall under Bysantine Rule.* After Simeon's death the powerful Bulgarian state rapidly began to decline. The causes of this decline were the protracted exhaustive wars, the pauperization of the masses and, above all, the centrifugal tendencies among the boyars, each of whom wanted to be independent within his own lands. In 969 the rulers of Western Bulgaria, David, Moisei, Aaron and Samouil, proclaimed their independence. A contributing factor to the nation's rapid downfall was the weakness of Simeon's son, Peter (927-969), who permitted Byzantine influence to penetrate Bulgaria.

Torn inside and attacked from the outside, Eastern Bulgaria soon collapsed, and in 972 fell under Byzantine rule. Western Bulgaria, where Tsar Samouil had emerged as a powerful monarch, remained free, however. Samouil waged stubborn and victorious wars against the Byzantine Empire and established unity among the Southern Slavs on a federative feudal basis. However, the independence of this western outpost did not continue for long after Samouil's death (1014). Undermined by separatism and the treachery of some of the boyars, Western Bulgaria fell in 1018 under the sway of Byzantium, whose emperor was then Basileus II, known as the Bulgarian-Slayer.

The conquerors preserved the existing order in the country until the death of Basileus II (1025). After that a decline set in within the Byzantine Empire too: abuses and malversations on the part of the authorities became more frequent and the people were burdened with heavy taxes. What was known as the *pronia* was introduced, i. e. higher officials received lands together with their population in payment for services. The Church was worst of all in its abuses and plunders. The Bulgarian lands, no longer protected by state power, were invaded by the Pechenegs, Cumans and Uzae and were also crossed by the Crusaders. All these invaders ransacked, plundered and burnt down Bulgarian localities. The Bogomil movement turned into a movement for the liberation of the people, not only from

social evils but also from an alien political rule. Revolts broke out in Macedonia, Sofia, along the Danube and Black Sea coast, and elsewhere.

*The Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Bulgaria's Consolidation and Territorial Expansion.* The long struggles of the Bulgarians against Byzantine rule were finally crowned with success. In 1185 a revolt broke out in Turnovo which led to the liberation of Bulgaria.

The revolt was headed by the Turnovo boyars Assen and Peter, who were brothers. It soon assumed a nation-wide character. In 1187 a peace treaty was concluded with the Byzantine Emperor Isaac Angelus, who recognized the freed lands to the north of the Balkan mountains. This marked the emergence of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, whose first ruler was Assen I (1187-96).

The Byzantine Empire, too weak to crush the re-emerging Bulgarian nation by force of arms, incited the boyars who were dissatisfied with Assen to organize a conspiracy against him. In 1196 Assen was killed by the boyar Ivanko, a participant in the plot, who attempted with Byzantine aid to retain power in his own hands, but Peter arrived in Turnovo and forced Ivanko to flee to the Byzantines. The following year Peter too fell victim to a boyar plot. The youngest of the three brothers, Kaloyan (1197-1207), ascended the throne. A statesman endowed with boldness and vision, Kaloyan restricted the centrifugal tendencies of the boyars and strengthened the central power. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Byzantine Empire, he conquered Varna, freed the Bulgarian lands in Thrace and part of Macedonia, and won back the provinces of Belgrade and Branichevo. The Byzantine government was compelled to sue for peace in 1202 and to recognize Bulgaria's new territorial acquisitions.

In 1204 Kaloyan legalized his rule by concluding a Uniate agreement with the Pope. A special papal nuncio crowned him king, while the archbishop was given the title of Primate of the Bulgarian Church, which retained the Orthodox faith but passed under the spiritual guidance of the Pope.

At that time the Crusaders of the IV Crusade, forgetting all about Jerusalem, attacked the Byzantine Empire, captured and plundered Constantinople, destroyed the empire and on its ruins created their own Latin Empire with Baldwin as king. Epirus, headed by Theodor Comnenus, freed itself from Latin rule, while in Asia Minor, the Nicean Empire under Theodor Lascaris preserved its independence. Kaloyan attempted to establish good-neighbourly relations with the Latins, but Baldwin answered him haughtily that he should treat him as a vassal treats his sovereign. Thereupon Kaloyan made common cause with the Byzantine aristocracy in Thrace and launched a campaign to the south. In 1205 the Bulgarian and Latin armies clashed near Adrianople. The Latins suffered a disastrous defeat. «The flower of the Latin knighthood perished» wrote Robert de Clari. Baldwin himself was made prisoner and led to Turnovo, where he died in captivity. This great battle and the bravery of the Bulgarians created such a formidable impression in the West that it was remembered until the 17th century. Kaloyan proceeded to conquer Thrace and practically all of Macedonia, and laid siege to Salonika. Before the walls of this large city, however, he was slain by the Cuman leader Manastras as a result of a plot against the bold Bulgarian ruler.

After Kaloyan's death the conspirators put his nephew Boril on the throne (1207-18). Bulgaria rapidly began to decline. The boyars engaged in internecine strife, some parts of the kingdom were torn away from the central power. Bulgaria's neighbours seized the frontier lands. The people were subjected to plunder and were impoverished. The Bogomil movement now assumed an even more militant and revolutionary character, and spread throughout the nation. In 1211 Boril, intent on smashing this movement, summoned a church council to Turnovo, sentencing prominent Bogomils to death and banishment. But popular discontent, which began to manifest itself in partial revolts, could not be repressed by brute force. Taking advantage of the internal disorders, the son of Assen I, Ivan Assen, arrived in Bulgaria with Russian assistance and, supported by the people and

some boyars, entered Turnovo and proclaimed himself tsar.

Under the reign of Ivan Assen II (1218-41) Bulgaria became the most powerful country in South-East Europe. From the very onset the new king subjected the boyars to his authority, pacified the country and by diplomatic methods won back some of the lost Bulgarian lands. Bulgaria attained the peak of its power after routing Theodor Comnenus, the ruler of Epirus, who had violated a non-aggression pact concluded between the two countries and had invaded Bulgarian lands with a large army. The decisive battle was fought in 1230 at Klokotnitsa near Haskovo. The Byzantine army was crushed and what remained of it, together with Theodor Comnenus, was made prisoner. Ivan Assen II displayed a humanity almost unknown in the Middle Ages, leading off Theodor Comnenus into honourable captivity and permitting all the other prisoners to go back to their homes. This remarkable victory was immortalized in an inscription, carved by order of the tsar on a stone column in the Forty Holy Martyrs Church in Turnovo, which is still preserved. After the battle of Klokotnitsa the Macedonian towns opened their gates to the Bulgarians. Bulgaria once again ruled over most of the Balkan Peninsula. In this large kingdom conditions were ripe for an economic and cultural upswing. Commerce and trade flourished. The Ragusa (Dubrovnik) merchants, granted a royal permit and protected by the authorities, freely crossed the country. Ivan Assen II became the first Bulgarian tsar to mint copper, silver and gold coins. In 1235 a treaty of alliance against the Latin Empire was concluded between Bulgaria and the Nicean Empire. One of its clauses provided for the abolition of the Uniate and the independence of the Bulgarian Patriarchate. However, Ivan Assen II, who soon realized the political disadvantages of fighting the Latins, denounced this treaty and reigned in peace until his death.

*Ivailo's Anti-Feudal Uprising.* After the death of Tsar Ivan Assen II the Bulgarian state began to decline. Three minors ascended the throne in succession. The boyars again

raised their heads, hatching plots and waging bitter struggles to capture the throne. Taking advantage of these disorders, the Byzantines, Tartars and Hungarians attacked Bulgaria and annexed several important provinces.

During these dark years of unremitting wars and internecine strife, the situation of the peasantry sharply deteriorated. The boyars, in need of funds in order to carry on their feuds, imposed heavy taxes on the peasants and exacted more labour services. The peasants, moreover, were also plundered by royal officials. Various foreign invaders ravaged the lands and set the villages on fire. Worst of all was the Tartar invasion. The people were so oppressed, plundered and unprotected from foreign invaders that they were no longer content with the passive Bogomil protest and began to resort to arms, in order to save themselves from feudal oppression and Tartar invasions. A major peasant revolt broke out in 1277 in North-East Bulgaria. The rebels were under the command of the swineherd Ivailo, who was distinguished by great personal qualities — intelligence, courage, sympathy for the people's sufferings, circumspection and hatred for the tsar, boyars and Tartars. Ivailo called on the peasants to fight against the boyars. The rebels, well-armed, attacked the castles and routed two Tartar companies. The news of this victory spread like wildfire across the Bulgarian lands, and from all parts of the country volunteers arrived to join the popular peasant army. Ivailo expelled the Tartars and set out against the tsar and the boyars. Entire provinces passed over to his side. Not far from Turnovo the royal army was routed. Tsar Konstantin Assen perished in this battle. Early in 1278 Ivailo entered Turnovo, married the tsar's widow — the Byzantine Maria, and was proclaimed king.

The Byzantine Emperor closely followed the developments in Bulgaria. He decided to intervene so as to forestall a spread of the rebellion to his empire, where the peasants were no better off. A strong Greek army was dispatched to Bulgaria, which at the same time was attacked by the Tartars. Ivailo defeated the Tartars and beat off the Byzantines. But the peasants, who had won brilliant victories on the battlefield without making any real gains for themselves,

were completely exhausted and unable to continue the struggle. Ivailo sought help from the Tartar Khan Nogai, but instead of aid received a dagger in his back when on a visit at the Tartar court. His death put an end to this big popular anti-feudal revolt, the first of its kind in Bulgaria.

The suppression of the uprising led to the establishment of the rule of the boyars. The country was split up into a great number of feudal holdings, which pursued their independent policy and undermined the political integrity of Bulgaria. Central power grew weak and became a plaything in the hands of the boyars. Bulgaria was marching towards its inevitable doom. The rulers of the Terter and Shishman dynasties were unable to stop this process of disintegration and in the end, divided, torn and exhausted, the nation was unable to withstand the powerful Ottoman onslaught.

*Culture in Medieval Bulgaria (13th-14th c.).* In spite of feudal divisions and frequent wars, culture flourished and attained considerable heights in the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Most impressive were the accomplishments in the field of literature. In the second half of the 14th century a number of distinguished writers came to the fore, headed by Patriarch Evtimi, Grigori Tsamblak, and Konstantin Kostenechki. In addition to religious subjects which predominate in the works of the 13th and 14th century, laic elements are found as well. Short stories, novels, historical books and other compositions were written, revealing a heightened interest on the part of the educated circles for a more diversified literary diet, transcending the narrow framework of ecclesiastic literature. A number of works of a popular character and reflecting the views of wider strata of the population appeared. These apocryphal writings were written in a fresh, vivid and artistic style.

The arts too flourished during these two centuries. Numerous still extant monuments in Turnovo, Vidin, near Assenovgrad and elsewhere testify to the accomplishments in architecture of that time. Even more striking were the achievements in painting. The most remarkable example are the frescos in the Boyana Church, south of Sofia, which date back to 1259. These reveal a pronounced realistic trend,

a serious effort to individualize the images. The portraits done by the Boyana masters transcend the traditional ecclesiastic style of the medieval epoch, which was distinguished by symbolism and an absence of the personal element. The Boyana frescos represent an almost unique achievement in the history of church painting, a transition to the great Italian painters of the Renaissance.

*Bulgaria's Conquest by the Turks.* In the 14th century, as a result of feudal internecine strifes, dynastic struggles and frequent wars, the Balkan states were completely exhausted and almost prostrate. Internally divided, they were too impotent to withstand the powerful Ottoman invasion. At that time the military feudal aristocracy of the new Ottoman state in North-West Asia Minor set out to conquer new lands. The Turks directed their forces towards the Balkan Peninsula and in 1352 captured the first fortress — Dimpe on the peninsula of Gallipoli. From there they advanced along two main routes: the diagonal — towards Sofia and Belgrade, and the Aegean coastal — towards Salonika and Bitolya, gradually conquering the whole Balkan Peninsula.

Bulgaria, divided into three parts — the kingdoms of Turnovo and Vidin, and an independent Black Sea province — did not capitulate without a fight; the people, in particular, put up a heroic resistance, but some of the boyars, intent only on preserving their own selfish privileges, passed over to the enemy. Bulgaria's conquest was accompanied by wholesale ruin and destruction. A contemporary of these events, the Sveta Gora monk Isai, wrote sadly: «Some of the Christians died by the sword, others were led off into captivity, while those remaining were decimated by untimely death. . . Alas, what a sad sight it was! The land remained deserted, bereft of all goods — men, cattle, and other fruits. . .»

In the conquered Bulgarian lands the new Turkish masters established a military feudal system, which represented a lower stage of development than the feudalism which had existed there before. They stopped the natural development of the more advanced Bulgarian feudal economy, which inevitably would have led, as it did in Western Europe,

to a more progressive social system. Destroying the feudal exploitation of the Bulgarian boyars, the Turks replaced it by even more violent forms of plundering the subjected population. Turkish feudalism shackled the Bulgarian people in a complex system of dependence and subjection, of a multitude of heavy taxes and onerous labour services, of national and religious discrimination, retarding their economic and cultural development by many centuries.

*Anti-Turkish Revolts.* Subjected to severe trials and tribulations, the Bulgarian people did not reconcile themselves to their fate. They waged long and relentless struggles, filling their history with glorious pages. The aspirations for freedom found an expression in various manifestations of partial and mass resistance, in determined opposition to all attempts at forceful assimilation, in armed revolts and uprisings. Bulgaria had hardly been overrun by the Ottoman flood, when these revolts started. They gathered momentum as time went by, attaining their peak in the famous Chiprovo uprising of 1688. The 18th century brought to the fore a new form of struggle for independence — the haidouk movement. The typical haidouk was a kind of Balkan nationalist Robin Hood, friend and avenger of the poor and downtrodden against their oppressors — foreigners and local quislings. These popular protectors, roaming in the mountain fastnesses, have given rise to a wealth of exquisite folk ballads, which are still sung today. In their fight for independence the Bulgarian people drew added comfort and inspiration from Turkey's increasingly unsuccessful wars, at first against Austria and later against Russia.

The uprisings during the 15th-18th centuries, an expression of the people's seething discontent with the Turkish regime of violence and abuses, were all abortive. Usually they were spontaneous, isolated and on a local basis, and the insurgents were poorly armed. But although put down, the revolts gradually sapped the foundations of the Turkish Empire, fanned the fighting spirit of the people and fortified their determination to continue the struggle until eventual victory



In this hard and uneven fight, the Bulgarians pinned their hopes in the fraternal Russian people. «Uncle Ivan» became a popular symbol of these hopes and became part of the folklore.

Woeful Bulgaria writes a complaint,  
Addressing it to mighty Russia:  
«Please, come and free us;  
The Turks have tormented us enough.»

The heavy yoke did not dry up the people's thirst for knowledge, nor did it destroy their cultural traditions. The monasteries and monastic schools had become centres of education and literary life. Renowned Bulgarian literary figures such as Grigori Tsamblak, Konstantin Kostenechki, Father Pcyu, Parteni Pavlov and many others continued to work in those dark days, keeping the spirit of the people awake. Bulgarian literature was imbued with a spirit of hatred for the oppressors and with a thirst for freedom. Another field of art which underwent considerable development during those days was that of folklore — songs and tales. Nor did the applied and fine arts — architecture, painting, woodcarving, embroidery — cease to develop. The cultural traditions which had been preserved and the new spiritual values which were created maintained the national identity of the Bulgarians, despite all the attempts of the enslavers to denationalize and assimilate them.

*The Rebirth of the Bulgarian Nation.* One of the finest pages in Bulgaria's historic development is its national rebirth, a movement of National Revival stretching over something like a century — from the late 18th century to 1878, when Bulgaria re-emerged on the map of Europe as an independent state. In the course of this century the country underwent profound social and economic changes: trade and the crafts developed, manufacture and capitalist enterprises, which dealt a telling blow to the Turkish feudal system, made their appearance. In the countryside there emerged big landholdings, a new type of feudal estates

which turned out great quantities of farm produce for the market.

The economic changes led to basic changes in the class structure of society. Along with a numerous peasantry, there now appeared a commercial and industrial bourgeois class. In the country there were also chorbadjis, rich men who represented usury capital and who, together with the Turkish authorities and Greek clergy, oppressed the people. With the development of the new commodity-money relations, conditions ripened for the downfall of feudalism and the victory of capitalism. This, in turn, made it necessary to create a national-liberation ideology and to wage a struggle for social and political emancipation.

The ideas and aspirations of the newly emerging forces within the framework of the Bulgarian society as well as of the oppressed masses found an expression in Païssi Hileendarski's historic book: «Slav-Bulgarian History». This book was an impassioned appeal to the Bulgarian people to fight against their oppressors. In it Païssi wrote about the glorious past of the nation, the wealth of its language and of its land, now trampled upon by the Turkish tyrants. Païssi's famous book reflected the interests and aspirations of the popular masses, who became the basic motive force of the national-liberation struggle. Païssi ruthlessly exposed the traitors to their nation, pointed out the Slav affiliation of the Bulgarians and showed the way to national rebirth and liberation. This «first spark of national self-consciousness» set aflame national education, fortified the national consciousness of the progressive Bulgarian circles and exerted a powerful influence on the whole development of the national liberation struggle. Sofroni Vrachanski was the first to continue the work of Païssi, devoting his entire life to educational and literary activity. To the intensified aspirations for a lay education for the new social forces, connected with production and trade, Dr. Peter Beron provided the answer by his «Fish Primer», published in 1824. The inauguration of the first lay school in Gabrovo in 1835 by V. Aprilov and N. Palaouзов carried into practice the idea of reforming the old educational system. The educational upsurge gripped the entire country within a short

space of time. Schools and library clubs were opened in towns and villages, good teachers were selected, manuals and other books were produced, lectures were delivered, entertainments were organized, and so on. Gripped by patriotic fervour, the people gave their forces and funds for education and culture.

Towards 1876 Bulgaria had about 1 500 elementary and quite a few secondary schools. «There was hardly a Bulgarian village», wrote the amazed American correspondent MacGahan at that time, «without a school, hardly a Bulgarian child unable to read or write, so that the percentage of literates in Bulgaria is equal to that of Great Britain and France. . . As a matter of fact, these Bulgarians, far from being the savages we considered them to be, are an industrious, diligent, honest, civilized and peaceful people.» Education was organized on a broad democratic basis. Despite the heavy Turkish yoke, the Bulgarian people outstripped their oppressors in their educational and cultural development.

Education, freed from the noxious influence of the Greek pan-Hellenistic circles, benefited from the positive influence of progressive Russian thought. V. Aprilov made it quite clear that only in fraternal Russia could the young generation be trained to serve their country loyally. In this economic, educational and cultural effervescence the Bulgarian nation found an expression of its own and assumed shape as a separate entity and community within the confines of the decadent Ottoman Empire.

*The Church Struggle.* Bulgaria's educational and cultural upswing was accompanied by the struggle for church autonomy. This struggle was directed against the Greek patriarchate, which after the Balkan Peninsula had fallen under the heel of the Turks had become the supreme master in church affairs in the lands inhabited by Bulgarians. During the first centuries of alien domination the Greek clergy, supported by the Turkish authorities, ruthlessly exploited and plundered the Bulgarians, while later it attempted to assimilate them and thus to create a great Greece. In order to realize their aims, the Greek clergymen

burned Bulgarian books and persecuted Bulgarian teachers. The people, putting up a fierce resistance to these attempts, fought for the autonomy of their church. In striving for economic consolidation and progress they had to overcome the opposition and rivalry of the Greek bourgeoisie and its tool — the patriarchate of Constantinople.

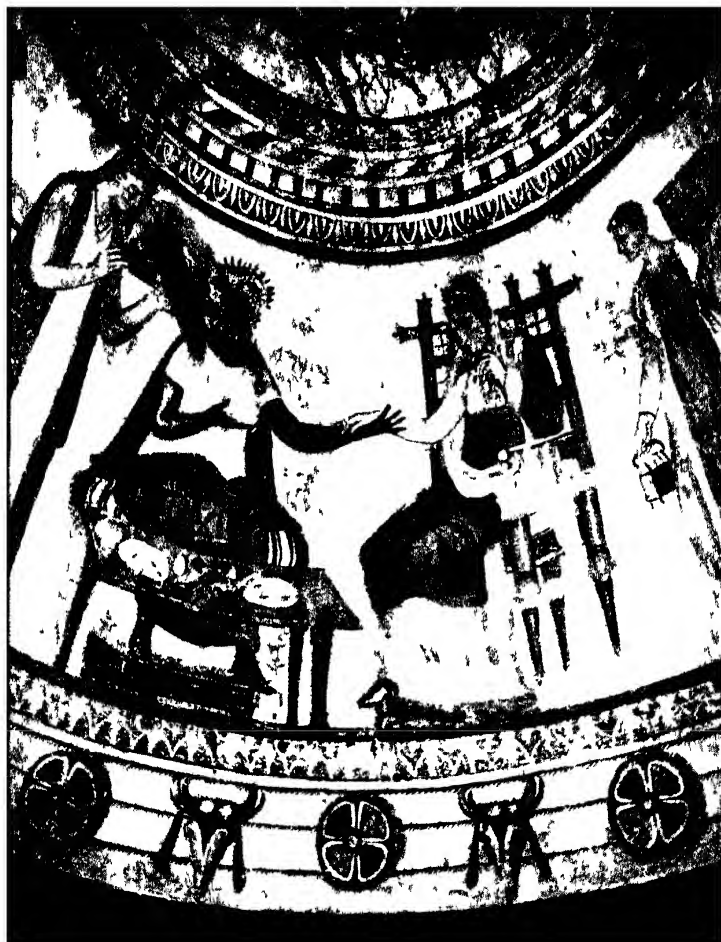
Primarily, the struggle assumed the form of a fight for church autonomy, because within the Ottoman Empire the recognition of national independence required the presence of an independent church. Moreover, only in this manner was it possible to put up a barrier to hellenization and megalot-Greek plans, by means of which the patriarchate aimed at foiling the emancipation of the Bulgarian people. The church struggle was therefore essentially a national-liberation struggle for the crystallization of the Bulgarian people as an independent national unit within the Turkish Empire. In the heat of this struggle the Bulgarian nation took shape and became self-conscious.

Outstanding leaders in this national church struggle were Neofit Bozveli from Kotel and Ilarion Makariopolski from Elena. These fervent patriots, in the name of the Bulgarian people, sent a request to the Turkish government and to the patriarchate, demanding that Bulgarians be appointed as bishops in Bulgarian lands and that the Bulgarians living in Constantinople be authorized to open their own school and church there. The patriarchate rejected these demands and maligned Neofit and Ilarion before the Turkish authorities, as a result of which these two staunch patriots were banished. But this did not put an end to the struggle. The large Bulgarian colony in Constantinople organized mass demonstrations, before which the Turkish government gave in, so that the demands for an autonomous school and church were granted. After the Crimean War (1853-56) the struggle became even more intense. The discontent of the people became nation-wide. The class differentiation which had followed in the wake of the economic and social changes now had its repercussions on the course of the mass struggle. Two trends now made their appearance: a moderate or conservative trend, headed by Gavril Krustevich, and an extreme or democratic trend,

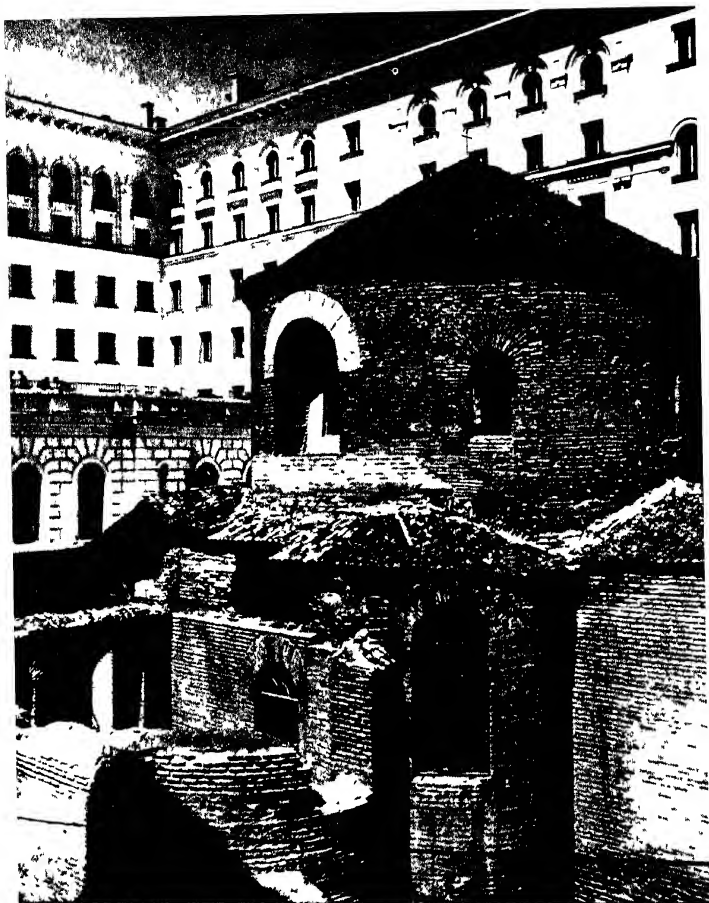
whose foremost spokesman was Petko Slaveikov, a distinguished poet and public figure, the father of the great poet Pencho Slaveikov. The moderate representatives of the large commercial and industrial bourgeoisie advocated negotiations with the patriarchate, while the extremists, representing the middle and petty bourgeoisie, were in favour of an all-out struggle, no holds barred, to the victorious end. In the heat of this struggle guerilla bands organized by the Bulgarian colony in Rumania entered Bulgarian territory. The struggle for political freedom entered its decisive phase. To blunt the mass dissatisfaction and forestall the planned uprising, the Turkish government published in 1870 a decree, providing for the creation of an independent Bulgarian church, headed by an exarch.

*The National Liberation Struggle.* The struggles of the Bulgarian people for freedom cut across the dark centuries of Turkish rule like a line of fire. These struggles gathered momentum during the first half of the 19th century, when spontaneous agrarian revolts profoundly shook the Ottoman Empire and compelled the Turkish government to introduce certain reforms with the aim of stopping the popular discontent. But the grievances, far from stopping, became particularly acute after the Crimean War. The craftsmen and petty merchants who had been ruined by foreign competition as well as the pauperized peasants saw their only salvation in the overthrow of the alien yoke by resorting to arms. Georgi S. Rakovski (1821-67) became the first ideologist of these impoverished social circles and leader of the organized revolutionary struggle. A great son of the nation and the forger of the national-revolutionary ideology, Rakovski looms as one of the major figures of his epoch: a tireless educator, a scholar, a poet, a journalist, a politician, a first-rate organizer and a selfless revolutionary.

Born and reared in the acute patriotic milieu of Kotel, while still a pupil in Constantinople participating in the church struggle, Rakovski emerged as an undisputed leader of and devoted fighter for his people's national aspirations during the '60s of the past century. His supreme ideal



*Part of the frescos in the Thracian tomb at Kazanluk*

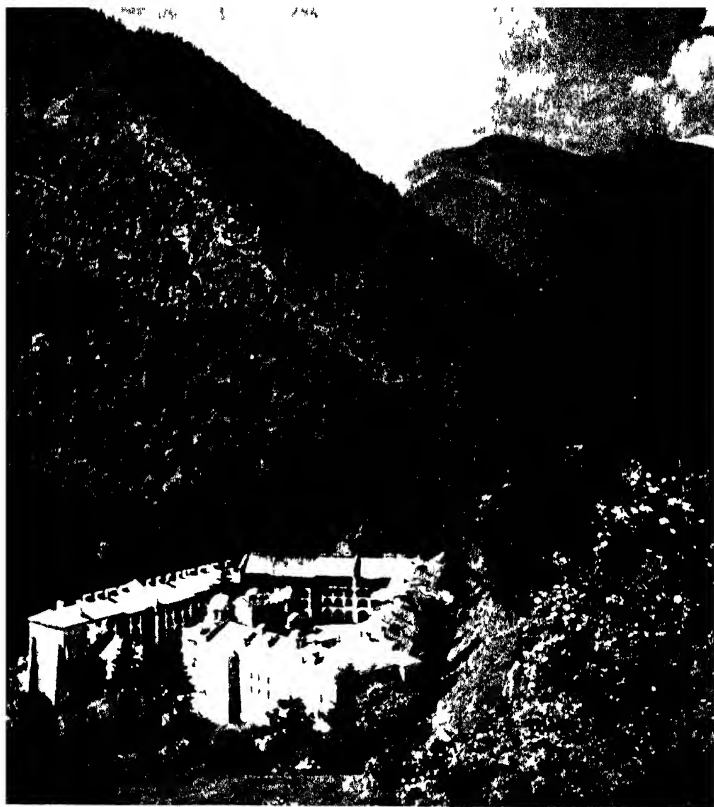


*One of the oldest architectural monuments in the Balkan Peninsula  
St George Church (formerly part of a Roman building), now  
in the courtyard of a new building in Sofia's city centre*



*The ruins of Tsarevets in the medieval Bulgarian capital of Turnovo*





*The Rila Monastery*

to which he devoted all his powers and abilities, was the freedom of his homeland. This love for his people and his country inspired his whole thinking and dreams while he was still a mere youth. It gave him the force to roam in the Balkan mountains with a gallant band, to support all the trials and tribulations, to spend a long time in exile and to rot for many years in damp prisons, to be sentenced to death and to fearlessly face death. The fiery patriot loved his people boundlessly. To quote his own words: «So long as my hands and feet support me and so long as I feel the slightest intelligent force within myself, I shall not cease to work for my people, whom I have loved so strongly since youth and who are the most precious thing I treasure in this world.» Rakovski was the first to show to the people that only by means of an organized revolutionary struggle could they win political freedom. He stressed that freedom could not be won «without dear sacrifices» and called on the people «with one general blow» to decide their «glorious future». And this, he held, could be attained only by guerilla bands, composed of haidouks and of men specially trained abroad. The father of the Bulgarian guerilla tactics, Rakovski forged the first Bulgarian military force in 1861 -- the Bulgarian legion in Belgrade. Through his versatile activity and his numerous contacts with progressive-minded people in various countries, Rakovski placed the Bulgarian problem on a broad foundation and became, in the words of Hristo Botev, «the never-to-be-forgotten teacher» of all militants after him.

The ideology of Georgi Rakovski represented a big step forward in Bulgarian political thinking. For the first time he clearly defined the revolutionary struggle as a road towards freedom and pointed out the need of a central leadership of local secret committees with the propagandist tasks of a previously trained revolutionary army.

As a result of Rakovski's activity, the bands of the glorious guerilla leaders Panayot Hitov and Philip Totyu entered the country in 1868. The news about this bold exploit spread like wildfire throughout the country and produced great patriotic fervour. Even more disturbed were the ruling circles and their Bulgarian henchmen when one year

later the bands of Hadji Dimiter and Stefan Karadja also entered Bulgaria. The well-trained rebels, dressed in a special uniform and equipped with modern arms, fought regular battles against the Turkish troops and gendarmes in several places. In these battles most of the guerillas, including their two intrepid leaders, perished, but the heroism and patriotism of these men fired the imagination of the people and steel'd their determination to overthrow the foreign yoke and become the masters of their own destinies.

The guerilla bands did not attain the aims they had set themselves. Their failure made it necessary to find new tactics for the revolutionary struggle. The man who was to answer the supreme need at this crucial juncture was Vassil Levski (1837-73), the greatest idol of the Bulgarian people, the man who in his own day was called «the Apostle of Freedom». With his name is linked the new tactic of the national-liberation struggle: the creation of secret militant organizations inside the country in preparation for a nationwide uprising. Levski emerged as the foremost organizer and the outstanding leader of the Bulgarians' struggle for freedom. The most striking incarnation of the popular will for freedom, he was a unique combination of thought and action, of idea and exploit. He won the minds and hearts of all by his boundless love for the people and his readiness to sacrifice himself for their liberation. «I have devoted myself to my country», he stated, «to serve it until death and to work according to the will of the people.» Levski had no life of his own outside the needs, sufferings and aspirations of the tormented people and he therefore declared: «If I win, the whole nation wins; if I lose, it's only my head that I lose.» He was in every way a fine person: modest, sober and selfless, and he had a rare gift of attracting people; in short, he was the ideal organizer, who knew how to draw the masses into the revolutionary struggle. Levski was the first to attach supreme importance to the people's struggle on a mass basis as an independent factor, and he considered correct organization to be the most important weapon for attaining victory. Levski forged the Internal Secret Revolutionary Organization, covering the whole country with a network of secret committees. A consistent revolu-

tionary democrat, Levski maintained that the Turkish system of despotism and tyranny could be done away with only by a revolution. He advocated the creation of a sacred and pure republic, built on the solid foundations of social justice and equal rights for all nationalities. Levski was not opposed to the Turkish people but only to their government, which oppressed not only the Bulgarians but even the Turks in a most barbarous manner. He advocated genuine equality between the Balkan nations and the creation of a Balkan federative republic.

Levski's ideas of liberation had a pronounced revolutionary democratic character. His views on the revolution and on the future structure of Bulgaria expressed the aspirations of the working people, of the rural and urban masses.

In the heat of the preparations for a nation-wide uprising the selfless people's tribune fell into the hands of the Turkish authorities and in 1873 he was publicly hanged in Sofia.

Another important revolutionary figure of that time was Lyuben Karavelov (1834-79). His political views took shape under the influence of the Russian revolutionary democrats and the Slavophiles. Karavelov was in contact with Levski and contributed much to the preparation of the revolutionary struggle. A prominent scholar, journalist and man of letters, he ruthlessly flayed the enemies of the people, fanned the patriotic and revolutionary spirit and made a signal contribution to the creation of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee. After the death of Levski, Karavelov confined himself to educational activities.

The revolutionary democratic traditions of Vassil Levski and his inspired struggle were continued by the fiery bard of the national revolution, Hristo Botev (1848-76). Bulgarians are deservedly proud of Botev, the immortal poet and born revolutionary. A worthy continuer of Levski's mission, Botev impregnated the revolutionary ideology with considerable social content and set as an urgent task the political and social emancipation of the Bulgarian people. Having been reared in a typical Bulgarian environment of poverty and oppression and having imbibed in Russia the most progressive ideas of the '80s, he placed all his forces

and great talents at the service of his people. With his ardent political articles and his fiery inspired verses, Botev called on the people to take up the fight for freedom and mercilessly exposed their enemies. Combining ardent patriotism with genuine internationalism, he held that the peoples could win freedom only in fraternal alliance, by making common cause against the oppressors. Bulgarians should unite, said Botev, not only with «the oppressed and down-trodden Turkish people» but with all «victims of the present social order», which permits the existence of sultans and capitalists, on the one side, and of oppressed and poor, on the other. And he continued: «Smash this hierarchy of mankind (i. e. the classes) and you will see that the causes of your sufferings will cease to exist». According to this great revolutionary, there was only one road of salvation for the people from their «unbearable plight» — «an immediate and desperate revolution» which would cleanse the Balkan Peninsula not only from the Turks but from everything that hindered its «absolute human freedom». Turkey is on its way out, said Botev, corroded by acute internal contradictions. It is unable to leap over its «historic grave». It continues to exist only because of the all-out support of the European capitalists. «In Europe there is a plot and continues to be one», Botev wrote, «against the emancipation of the South Slavs and, in general, against the freedom of mankind.» He saw the sufferings forced upon the peoples by capitalism and wanted to move forward from feudalism directly to socialism, skipping capitalism. These ideas stamped Botev as a utopian socialist, a forerunner of scientific socialism in Bulgaria. With his progressive ideas and his fiery revolutionary activity Botev propelled the national liberation struggle forward to its epic climax — the April 1876 Uprising.

*The April 1876 Uprising.* The April 1876 Uprising marks the high watermark of the long liberation struggles of the Bulgarian people. It broke out as a result of the exceedingly sharpened social and national contradictions within the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the 19th century. The 1875 uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina undoubtedly

gave a powerful impetus to the revolutionary upsurge in Bulgaria. «No, no! There is no other salvation but to take up the struggle at once», wrote Botev that year. And the revolutionary committee proceeded immediately to organize the Stara Zagora uprising which, however, was quickly suppressed. This did not upset the apostles of the armed struggle; the newly founded Giurgevo revolutionary committee, headed by S. Zaïmov, N. Obretenov and others, worked out a plan for an uprising, appointed and sent out the leaders of the four revolutionary sections, into which Bulgaria had been divided, with instructions to start a nation-wide uprising on May 1, 1876. The preparations proceeded apace, especially in the revolutionary section of Panagyurishtë. Guerilla bands were organized, the rebels were trained, a secret postal service was started, a militia created, paroles issued, etc. At the meeting of the band delegates in Oborishtë, a locality not far from Panagyurishtë, Georgi Benkovski was elected supreme commander of the armed uprising and instructions were given to the apostles to proclaim and lead the forthcoming struggle. A leakage made it necessary to start the uprising ten days earlier than originally planned — on April 20th. The first shot for freedom was fired in Koprivshitsa in the Plovdiv sector. T. Kablesnikov, the local commander, informed Benkovski in Panagyurishtë by letter that the uprising had started; written in human blood, this is now known as the «bloody letter». The uprising rapidly spread to Sredna Gora and the northern Rhodope mountains, penetrated to the heart of the Balkan mountains, including the regions of Turnovo, Gabrovo and Sevlievo. The revolutionary explosion shook the Ottoman Empire, which with unprecedented ruthlessness hurled its forces against the rebellious localities. Major engagements were fought at Panagyurishtë, Klisoura, Peroushtitsa, Batak, Bratsigovo, Dryanovo Monastery and elsewhere, in which the Bulgarians performed rare feats of heroism. «We have decided to die for the right of our people», declared the guerillas surrounded at Dryanovo Monastery in reply to an ultimatum to surrender, and most of them perished. V. Petlesnikov, commander of the uprising in Bratsigovo, was caught and subjected to terrible tortures. At their own insistent

demand some 18 girls and women were killed in Peroushtitsa by the heroes Kocho Chistemenski, Spas Ginev and Spas Tsitselin who then proceeded to commit suicide, so as not to fall alive into the hands of the Turks. After wanton cruelties, wholesale destruction of villages and towns and extermination of their inhabitants, the Turks succeeded in putting down this glorious revolt.

Wherever the enemy passed, he left behind a deep track of blood, mass graves, heaps of ashes and ruins. In stirring verses the popular poet, Ivan Vazov, expressed the tragic fate of his people during the suppression of this historic uprising.

Everywhere tyrants, evil, bloodthirsty tigers!  
The infirm slaughtered, slaves drowned in blood!  
Villages deserted, townships destroyed,  
Smoking ruins and desecrated churches. .

Deeply shocked by the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria, Vazov's great French colleague, Victor Hugo, laid bare the ugly face of the Turkish hangman before the whole world.

To the aid of the people, subjected to decimation, came the valiant band of Hristo Botev. From Kozlodouï it fought its way to the Balkan mountains near Vratsa, where the great son of the people, the superb fighting poet and revolutionary, Hristo Botev, achieved the crowning apotheosis of his short meteoric career by perishing on the battlefield, true to the last to the great ideals he had proclaimed in prose and in poetry.

The April 1876 Uprising, staged by the working peasantry, poor artisans and the people's intelligentsia, shook the decadent Ottoman Empire to its very foundations, revealed before the whole world the barbaric face of its satraps and with the blood it shed illuminated the idea of freedom and eventually led to the liberation of Bulgaria by the fraternal Russian people.

*The Russian-Turkish War of Liberation (1877-78).* The savage suppression of the April 1876 Uprising gave rise to a wave of protest in progressive circles throughout civi-

lized Europe. Prominent public figures, writers and journalists everywhere rose in defence of the maltreated Bulgarians, including Garibaldi, Victor Hugo, E. Girardin, I. S. Turgenev, F. M. Dostoievsky, MacGahan, Elishka Krasnogorska, and many others. But the strongest repercussions were felt in Russia, linked by close ties of kinship and language to the Bulgarian people. At her insistence a Great Power Conference was summoned in Constantinople the same year. The conference decided that Bulgaria should be granted autonomy, but Turkey refused to carry out this decision. After the failure of this conference, Russia declared war on Turkey on April 24, 1877. The news about the declaration of war aroused jubilation throughout Bulgaria. Detachments of volunteers were formed to help the Russians.

After marching across Rumania, the Russian troops crossed the Danube — a unique feat at that time — and advanced eastward toward Razgrad and Roussé and westward towards Plevén and Vidin, while the vanguard under General Gurko, together with Bulgarian volunteers, set out for the Balkan mountains in a southward direction.

Wherever the Russian troops arrived they were showered with flowers and presents by the local population. «One cannot doubt for a moment», wrote the correspondent of the London «Times», «that the Russians are welcome guests here. The poor people are literally crying, praying and throwing themselves around the necks of the liberators...» The Bulgarians helped the Russians in every conceivable way, supplying food and fodder, transporting munitions, building roads and bridges, performing intelligence tasks in the enemy's rear, organizing and servicing hospitals, carrying food and water to the battle-lines, helping and saving the wounded. In addition, several free-corps detachments were formed in the country to support the Russians, under the command of such renowned guerilla leaders as Panayot Hitov, Old Man Zhelyu, Old Man Ilyo, Petko Voivoda, and others. These detachments performed a series of most useful functions: protecting the flanks of the Russian armies, pursuing the bashi-bazouks, serving as vanguard, participating in battles.

In the epic battles at Stara Zagora, Shipka, Plevén, Sheinovo and many other places the Russian troops, the



Bulgarian volunteers and the Rumanian soldiers performed many feats of bravery. Conscious of waging a just war, they were imbued with a high spirit, and in a few months crushed the forces of the Ottoman Empire. At San Stefano, before the gates of Constantinople, Turkey was compelled to sue for peace and on March 3, 1878 it signed a treaty of surrender. On the map of the Balkan Peninsula the boundaries of yet another independent state were drawn. Against the background of the great victories of this war of liberation stand out the names of such renowned Russian commanders as Gurko, Skobelev, Dragomirov, Stoletov, Kalitin, and others.

The European powers, however, could not reconcile themselves to the military successes of the Russian arms. At their insistence the Berlin congress was convened, at which Bulgaria was carved up into three parts: Northern Bulgaria, including the Sofia region, formed a Bulgarian semi-independent principality; Southern Bulgaria, called Eastern Roumelia, formed an autonomous region under the suzerainty of the sultan; Aegean Thrace and Macedonia were returned outright to Turkey. The treaty of Berlin, the fruit of mutual envy and egocentric policies, was an unjust and reactionary treaty, directed against Bulgaria's national interests.

The Russian-Turkish War of 1877-78 was, in essence, a just and progressive war. Destroying Ottoman domination in North and South Bulgaria and eliminating medieval feudalism there, it played the role of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, which opened the way for the creation of a national state and culture, for the development of the then progressive bourgeois-capitalist system.

This war of liberation was a striking manifestation of fraternal unity and mutual assistance, an example of firm and unshakeable friendship between two peoples, sealed with the blood of 200,000 Russians who laid down their lives on Bulgarian soil. For the Russian people this war was something eminently humane, in which they played the role of saviours.

*The First Years of Freedom.* The Bulgarian people vehemently expressed their indignation against the inequitable

Berlin Treaty, by which their country was split up. In many parts of the lands returned to Turkish rule revolts broke out, aiming at unification with Bulgaria. Meanwhile, the foundations of the internal structure of the new Bulgarian state were laid under a temporary Russian administration. Marin Drinov, a Bulgarian from Panagyurishtë and professor at Kharkov University, was placed in charge of the Ministry of Education. He developed a most useful programme, placing education on a broad democratic basis, organizing the press, taking the first steps for the creation of a national library and of museums, and suggesting Sofia as capital of the principality. The leaders of the temporary Russian administration worked out a draft constitution, which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly in Turnovo on February 10, 1879. Two parties came to grips in this assembly — the Liberals and the Conservatives. The Liberal Party, headed by P. R. Slaveikov, Petko Karavelov (a brother of Lyuben Karavelov), Dragan Tsankov and others, was the spokesman of the petty bourgeoisie and fought for a liberal-democratic administration under the Prince. The Conservative Party, at whose helm stood Konstantin Stoilov, G. Grekov and M. Balabanov, represented the well-to-do classes (merchants, usurers, etc) and fought for a conservative-monarchistic administration and for restricting the rights of the people. From this clash the Liberals emerged victorious, imposing the adoption of the Turnovo Constitution, which was liberal and democratic in character. It granted certain democratic rights and liberties to the people, such as freedom of speech, press, assembly and association, and electoral rights to all men above 21. The Constitution guaranteed private property over the means of production and the development of capitalism. Wide powers were given to the monarch, who became commander-in-chief of the armed forces and in whose hands was placed executive power. He signed the laws adopted in the Assembly and could dissolve it. This enabled the monarchical institution to become the mainstay of the bourgeoisie and to pursue an anti-popular policy throughout its existence.

The Constituent Assembly was followed by a Grand National Assembly which on April 17, 1879, elected the

German Prince Alexander Battemberg (whose nephew is known today as Lord Mountbatten), a relative of the Russian Empress, as Prince of Bulgaria. Upon his arrival in Bulgaria, Battemberg immediately proceeded to deprive the people of their freedoms, to spoil Bulgarian-Russian relations, and to hitch Bulgaria to the German-Austrian tandem. This aroused the indignation of the people, leading to bitter fights, in which the people won out, thus preserving the Turnovo Constitution and their relations with Russia.

*The Unification of Northern and Southern Bulgaria.* Eastern Roumelia was placed under an administration in accordance with the «Organic Constitution» worked out by an international commission, as stipulated in the Berlin Treaty. It was headed by a Governor General, appointed by the Sultan for a five-year term and approved by the Great Powers. He, in turn, appointed a five-men government, while the General Assembly was the legislative organ, the decisions of which were accepted by the Sultan. On Russian recommendation Aleko Bogoridi, a Bulgarian who had served in the Turkish administration for many years, was appointed as first Governor General. The senseless division of Bulgaria not only violated all historical and ethnic considerations but also impeded the economic, cultural and political development of the country. On the initiative of Zahari Stoyanov, a secret revolutionary committee was organized with the aim of bringing about the unification of Eastern Roumelia, Macedonia and the Bulgarian Principality through armed struggle. On September 4, 1885, a revolt broke out and on the 8th Prince Battemberg recognized the unification of Northern and Southern Bulgaria. The masses were jubilant; large meetings were held throughout the country.

The unification performed an important progressive role for Bulgaria's development along the road of capitalism. Removing the customs boundaries between the two regions, it created a larger national market and destroyed all dependence on the Sultan.

Incited by Austro-Hungary and Germany, Serbia attacked Bulgaria with the aim of nullifying the unification. The

Serbian troops, however, were badly trounced by the half-trained Bulgarians at Slivnitsa. Bulgaria's prestige soared overnight, and one after another the nations of Europe granted recognition to the unification of Northern and Southern Bulgaria

*Birth of the Socialist Movement.* After its liberation from Ottoman rule, Bulgaria rapidly developed along capitalist lines. The peasants, who had received small plots of land, and the artisans, burdened by heavy taxes and other impositions, began to grow poorer. The workers and farmhands were subjected to atrocious working conditions -- low wages, long working hours, poor conditions of work, etc. Women's and children's labour was used widely, as it was cheaper. The dissatisfied workers began to associate in defence of their interests. The first strikes broke out. The struggle of the workers assumed a more conscious and organized character as soon as the nascent labour movement was put in contact with scientific socialism. This was done by Dimitar Blagoev, the founder of socialism in Bulgaria and the first and most outstanding Marxist in the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Born in 1856 in the village of Zagorichene in Macedonia, the poor youth, avid for knowledge, studied in Constantinople, Adrianople, Gabrovo and Stara Zagora. After the Russian-Turkish war he left for Russia and enrolled at St. Petersburg University. Here Blagoev, under the influence of the Russian revolutionary movement, became a Marxist and in 1883 founded the socialist so-called Blagoev group. In 1885 the Russian police arrested him and expelled him from the country. Blagoev returned to Bulgaria the same year and began to publish the periodical «Contemporary Indicator», which greatly contributed to the creation of socialist cells in several localities and to the founding of the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party. On Blagoev's initiative, representatives of the different cells met in 1891 in Turnovo, where they decided to call a larger conference the same summer, at which the question of creating a social-democratic party was to be discussed. This enlarged conference took place on August 2, 1891, on Bouzloudja Peak,

and formed itself into the Constituent Congress of the Party. In spite of the objections on the part of some delegates, the decision was taken to create a Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party; a party programme and statutes were adopted and a General Council was elected. After the congress Blagoev published his book «What is Socialism and Can It Thrive in Bulgaria?». Citing numerous facts, Blagoev showed that capitalism was making headway in Bulgaria, that a working class was emerging and that therefore the conditions were ripe for the development of a socialist movement. The dissenters refused to bow to the congress decisions and were consequently not admitted to the Second Congress held in Plovdiv in 1892. They formed the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Union and called themselves «Unionists», while the Party members called themselves «Partists».

In the '90s capitalism made rapid progress in Bulgaria. The labour movement grew, the first trade unions made their appearance. Terror intensified under the Stambolov regime, and to oppose it more successfully the two groups merged into one party - the Bulgarian Workers' Social-Democratic Party. This step proved harmful to the Marxist character of the Party and for the socialist movement. Pretty soon the Unionists, who favoured a broad interpretation of Marxism, class collaboration, and common cause with the bourgeoisie, gained the upper hand. Dimitar Blagoev, supported by Georgi Kirkov, Gavril Genov and other revolutionary Marxists, began an uncompromising fight against the «common-causers» so as to preserve the Party's proletarian character. This struggle led to a second split, which occurred in 1903. The Party cleansed its ranks from the opportunists and became a genuine Marxist workers' party, calling itself the Party of the Narrow (i. e. narrow interpretation of Marxism, or left-wing) Socialists. It then directed its main attention to the industrial proletariat and in 1904 founded the General Trade Union. The Party headed the strike movement, which had gripped the country under the influence of the First Russian Revolution in 1905-7. In this fight for preserving the proletarian character of the Party a young man came to the fore — the printer Georgi Dimitrov. Born on June 18, 1882 in Kovachevtsi, a vil-

lage near Radomir, in a poor family, Georgi Dimitrov was compelled to leave school because of lack of funds. Exceedingly industrious and thirsty for knowledge, he succeeded through self-education in emerging as a trained Marxist, a loyal son of the working class and revolutionary Party, a selfless fighter for the triumph of socialism in Bulgaria. Dimitrov took an active part in the struggle for the consolidation of the Party. He was particularly active in the strike movement, heading the epic strike of the Pernik miners in 1906, which roused the mine workers from the meek acceptance of the capitalist yoke and made them join the ranks of the militant organized proletariat.

The Party of the Narrow Socialists waged a bold struggle in defence of the political rights of the working people and for the improvement of their material conditions, winning considerable popularity among the masses. On the eve of the Balkan wars it had already become the sole socialist revolutionary party in Bulgaria, a true defender of the working people.

*The Balkan Wars.* At the beginning of this century the young bourgeois Balkan states were preparing for war. As a result of the rapid development of capitalism, there arose a need for markets, for acquiring new lands. Turkey was at that time a tempting object, all the more so as its subject peoples were thirsting and fighting for freedom. But none of the Balkan states was by itself strong enough to cope with the vast Ottoman Empire. This prompted the creation of the Balkan Alliance, effected with the aid of Russia which, together with France and Great Britain, strove to bar the way to Austro-Hungary and Germany towards the domination of the Balkan Peninsula.

In March 1912 a treaty of alliance was concluded between Bulgaria and Serbia, comprising a secret annex on how the conquered territories were to be apportioned. The alliance was joined by Greece and Montenegro.

The Bulgarian bourgeoisie concealed its aggressive intents behind the ideals of «liberating the enslaved brothers and uniting the Bulgarian nation». It made clever use of the hopes of the Macedonian and Thracian population in Bul-

garian support for their national-liberation struggle. The aggressive plans of the bourgeoisie coincided with the aims of the monarchy, which was out to consolidate its rule by territorial expansion.

The allies decided to strike the main blow at Turkey in Eastern Thrace, to which three Bulgarian armies were sent. The Serbian, Montenegrine and Greek troops, supported by a Bulgarian army, were to fight in the west — in Macedonia, Epirus and Albania. The allied countries sent a note to Turkey with the demand for radical reforms in its European territories, in accordance with Art.23 of the Berlin Treaty. The Turkish government did not even bother to answer, and on October 18, 1912, the Balkan War broke out. The Bulgarian troops performed miracles of bravery at Lozengrad, Seliolou, Gechkenli, Petra and elsewhere. The Turks were expelled from their second line of defence as well — Lule Burgas — Bunar Hissar, retreating to the Chataldja lines, a mere 25 miles from Constantinople. On the other fronts too Bulgarian and allied troops won major victories. Within 25 days Turkey was smashed. On November 14, it requested the Bulgarian government to discontinue military operations and to begin peace negotiations. But Germany and Austro-Hungary wanted the war to go on, counting on an exhaustion of the allies which would enable them to set foot in the Balkan Peninsula. The situation of the Bulgarian troops deteriorated as a result of famine and cholera. Yet on November 16 Tsar Ferdinand gave orders to attack the strong Chataldja fortification line. More than half of the soldiers thrown into the attack were killed or wounded. Only then did Ferdinand accept the Turkish offer. The peace negotiations were started in London. The new Bulgaro-Turkish frontier was to run along the line Midia-Enos. But the Young Turks, incited by Germany and Austro-Hungary, carried out a coup d'état, rejected the treaty and hostilities were resumed. The allies captured the three besieged fortresses — Adrianople, Skutari and Yanina, compelling the Young Turks to capitulate and accept the peace treaty.

The Balkan war was, objectively considered, progressive in character, regardless of the aims of the various Balkan

bourgeoisies. It was a big step forward in the elimination of the feudal remnants in the Balkans and in the development of capitalism.

Serious differences made their appearance among the allies. While the Bulgarian troops were bearing the brunt of the war in the east, the Serbs settled down in Macedonia and on May 24, 1913, concluded a secret military treaty with Greece, which was directed against Bulgaria. The relations between the allies grew worse, as a result both of the incitements of the imperialist powers and of the bellicose policy of Ferdinand and his military clique.

The Party of the Narrow Socialists came out against the adventurous policy of the Balkan monarchs. It exposed the chauvinistic attempts of the bourgeois circles in the allied countries, established close contact with the fraternal socialist parties in Serbia and Greece, and called on the masses to fight against war and for a just and lasting peace, for a federative Balkan republic.

But the inter-allied war — Balkan War II — was not averted. On June 16, 1913, Ferdinand gave orders to the Bulgarian troops to go over to the attack against the forces of occupation in Macedonia. Although fighting bravely, the Bulgarians were forced to retreat to their old boundaries. Taking advantage of Bulgaria's difficulties, Rumania and Turkey attacked it in the rear. Ferdinand, backed by Russia, wanted the war to be stopped. A peace treaty was concluded at Bucharest, carving up most of Macedonia between Serbia and Greece. Rumania seized the Southern Dobroudja, while Turkey recuperated Eastern Thrace including Adrianople. All that was left to Bulgaria were the regions around Stroumitsa and Gorna Djoumaya as well as part of Western Thrace with the little port of Dedeagach. Bulgaria's casualties were high: 55,000 dead and 105,000 wounded. Bulgaria had suffered its first national disaster.

*World War I.* Unperturbed by this severe setback, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and monarchy held on to their aggressive plans. They were just waiting for the right moment. The outbreak of World War I, caused by the growing rivalries between the capitalist powers, seemed to offer a good



opportunity. This major holocaust, whose outbreak on August 1, 1914, was precipitated by the Sarajevo attempt, was a logical product of Europe's alignment into two opposing military camps — the Central Powers and the Entente—at the turn of the century. Subsequently the United States and Japan joined the fray. Despite popular opposition, Tsar Ferdinand dragged Bulgaria on to the side of the Central Powers — Germany, Austro-Hungary and Turkey. Prominent public figures, among whom was the nation's outstanding writer, Ivan Vazov, published a manifesto against Ferdinand's pro-German policy. On September 4, 1915, the pro-allied parties met with Ferdinand, and the leader of the Agrarian Union, Alexander Stamboliiski, warned the king that Bulgaria was headed for another disaster if it joined the Central Powers, telling him outright that he would not only lose his crown but also his head. For this act of courage Stamboliiski was thrown into prison.

The Party of the Narrow Socialists consistently fought against the war and against Bulgaria's joining either camp. But in September 1915 the Bulgarian government decreed general mobilization and on October 1st declared war on Serbia. The Narrow Socialists boldly declared their opposition to this war and their determination to fight for the triumph of peace and socialism.

Serbia was crushed. The Allies hastened to her aid through Salonika, but were repelled and forced to retreat to Greek territory. In order to relieve their western front, the German high command ordered the Bulgarians to stop at the frontier of officially neutral Greece. Thus a southern front was opened. In 1916 Bulgaria was dragged into war with Rumania. After winning major victories, the Bulgarian troops reached the Seret river in Rumania, where they met Russian troops. With the declaration of war the bourgeois opposition parties came out in support of the Radoslavov Government. The Party of the Narrow Socialists voted against military credits and came out against the II International, which had replaced the class war by «civil peace». It supported the decisions of the conferences in Zimmerwald in 1915, Kienthal in 1916 and Stockholm in 1917

for the creation of a new International, cleansed of all opportunists.

The war brought nothing but suffering to the Bulgarian people. The economy was disrupted, industry declined. The Germans plundered the country, while the local bourgeoisie amassed huge war profits.

The news about the Great October Socialist Revolution and the decree on peace aroused great enthusiasm among the Bulgarian masses. The Party of the Narrow Socialists intensified its antiwar propaganda; in many troop units soldiers' councils (soviets) were created. Revolts shook the army. Demonstrations of women and revolts of the hungry spread all over the country. Tsar Ferdinand was compelled to dismiss the Radoslavov Government and to appoint a cabinet of pro-Entente parties, headed by A. Malinov. But the new government did not break with the Germans either and did not start any peace negotiations.

*The Vladaya Insurrection.* The wrath and indignation of the people gathered momentum, when the new government continued the policy of its predecessor. The general desire for putting an end to the war and calling rulers and king to account could no longer be restrained. The soldiers at the front raised the slogan for an armed insurrection, for a republican administration. The uprising was further precipitated by the break-through of the allied armies at Dobro Polé in September 1918. Allied superiority in men and arms, as well as the determination of the Bulgarian soldiers to turn their arms against Ferdinand and his clique, made this break-through fairly easy. The Bulgarian troops rapidly withdrew, intent on going back home and on punishing those responsible for Bulgaria's entry into this war. The Supreme Military Command was too impotent to stop the general retreat. The underground soldiers' committee, headed by left-wing socialists, took rapid steps to organize a new revolutionary army. On September 23 and 24 an insurrection broke out at Pehchevo, Berovo and Tsarevo Selo. The rebellious units reached Kyustendil and captured the Supreme Military Headquarters. Other units passed through Gorna Djoumaya (Blagoevgrad) and all

set out for Radomir. This represented a spontaneous attempt on the part of the soldier masses to turn the imperialist war into a civil war. The Party of the Narrow Socialists kept calling on them to follow the example of their Russian brothers. Under the pressure of events, Stamboliiski was released from prison and, together with Raiko Daskalov and other members of Parliament, left for Radomir to meet the rebellious soldiers. Here on September 27 Raiko Daskalov proclaimed Bulgaria a republic with Stamboliiski as President and himself as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The rebels marched on Sofia, taking positions at Vladaya, Knyazhevo and Boyana for a concerted attack. The frightened government regrouped its forces during the night and on the next day, with German aid, succeeded in vanquishing the rebels. Thousands of soldiers were killed, many others thrown into prison. The Entente hastened to conclude an armistice with the Malinov Government, in order to buttress the bourgeoisie and to smash the revolutionary wave in the country.

Thus the Vladaya insurrection was drowned in blood. But it compelled Ferdinand to flee from the country, leaving the throne to his son Boris. With the signing of the armistice in Salonika on September 29 the war had come to an end for Bulgaria. The troops of the Entente occupied the country. Thus Bulgaria suffered a second national disaster through the fault of the monarchy and bourgeoisie.

*The Postwar Revolutionary Upheaval.* Politically isolated after the Salonika armistice, Bulgaria found itself in dire straits. Food stocks were exhausted, cattle destroyed, industry and transport disrupted. The cost of living, taxes, unemployment and starvation kept growing. The prisons were packed with rebellious soldiers. Under these conditions there emerged in the country a powerful movement for amnesty, for releasing the war prisoners who as hostages were held in Greece, for calling to account those responsible for the disaster.

The plight of the masses, who had suffered great privations during the war, intensified their indignation against the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. A number of strikes broke

out. Inspired by the example of the Russian workers and peasants, the masses, led by the left-wing Socialists, mobilized their forces in a broad movement for a better life, for the triumph of the ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

At the same time the old bourgeois parties, which had ruled the country, were quite discredited. The very rule of the bourgeoisie was in jeopardy. This compelled the monarchy and the big bourgeoisie to seek the aid of the petty bourgeois parties. Relying on the support of the occupation forces of the Entente, the bourgeoisie succeeded in retaining its domination. This, however, did not stop the revolutionary upsurge, which manifested itself in a series of strikes, in which not only economic but also political demands were raised. The most impressive of these was the action of protest, organized by the Party of the Narrow Socialists on July 27, 1919, for the improvement of food supplies and the punishment of the war criminals.

The revolutionary wave received a strong impetus from the harsh terms of the Neuilly Treaty, which was concluded on November 27, 1919. Bulgaria was deprived of its access to the Aegean Sea, losing also the Southern Dobroudja, a western frontier strip and the Stroumitsa valley, and had to pay reparations to the tune of 2,250 million francs, and to deliver considerable quantities of cattle and coal to the victors.

On December 24, 1919, the Party organized a nation-wide action against starvation and censorship, against the state of siege and the aid given to the Russian counter-revolutionaries. All civil servants, who had taken part in this action, were dismissed the next day. This led to the outbreak of the big transport strike. In support of the striking railwaymen the now renamed Communist Party called on all industrial and office workers to start a one-week general strike. But lack of unity within the leadership resulted in the failure of the railway strike. The revolutionary upsurge did not abate, however. After a certain period of quiet the struggle flared up again. In the 1920 elections the Communist Party emerged as the second strongest party in the country after the Agrarian Union. The same year a homoge-

nous Agrarian government was formed, which carried through a series of social reforms.

*The Military-Fascist Coup d'Etat of June 9, 1923.* The big business circles, whose interests had been affected by Stamboliiski's reforms, were getting ready for a comeback. First to unite were the various liberal factions in the National Liberal, Narodniki and Progressive Liberal parties into the People's Progressive Party, while the Constitutional Bloc comprised the Democratic, Radical and the newly-formed People's Progressive Party. In spite of these political mergers, the bourgeoisie realized that it was not strong enough to dislodge the Agrarian Union from power through parliamentary methods and it therefore set out to prepare a coup d'état. A secret fascist organization was formed for this purpose in 1922: known as «Naroden Zgovor» (National Union), it was headed by A. Tsankov and financed by banking capital. The Military League too was enlisted. The fascists further relied on the Union of Retired Officers and Non-commissioned Officers, the White Russians in Bulgaria, the terroristic organization of the Macedonian nationalists and the monarch. The first arrogant manifestation of fascism on the offensive was the bomb thrown into the schoolboy demonstration on May 24, 1921 and the burning of the Communist Party headquarters. This was a sign of alarm for all democratic and anti-fascist forces to unite. The fascists passed over to the offensive. The Constitutional Bloc came to terms with the White Russians and reactionary officers regarding the conditions of the coup d'état. The Agrarian Union began joint action with the Communist Party against the fascist onslaught. The incipient coup d'état of the «Black Bloc» was uncovered and foiled. The Agrarian Government expelled the White Russians from Bulgaria. But the Constitutional Bloc and the National Union continued their conspiratorial activities. In the autumn of 1922 the Bloc organized a meeting in Turnovo, but the Agrarian Union summoned a congress of sugar-beet producers on the same day and place. The masses which had congregated chased these people away. On the same day the Communist Party called together county assemblies, thus indirectly supporting the Agrarians.

A new blow was dealt the bourgeois parties in the autumn of 1922, when the Stamboliiski Government decided to hold a referendum on trying those responsible for the national disaster. Complete unity of purpose and action was established for the purpose between Agrarians and Communists. They voted together against the «Black Bloc». But the Agrarians, instead of consolidating the alliance, felt that after the crushing of the Constitutional Bloc and the victory in the referendum reaction was on its knees, and they now turned against the Communists. This considerably worsened relations between the two most powerful parties in the country. The reactionary bourgeoisie and the monarch took advantage of these differences and during the night of June 9, 1923 staged a monarcho-fascist coup d'état. Alexander Stamboliiski was caught and brutally murdered. Over 100,000 workers and peasants rose against the fascist coup d'état. The spontaneous uprising comprised practically every region in the country. It was suppressed, however. Hundreds of Communists and Agrarians were killed, while many others were thrown into jail.

*The September 1923 Anti-Fascist Uprising* The bourgeoisie considered the Communist Party as its mortal enemy. The first task of the fascist government was to smash the Communist Party, the leader of the Bulgarian proletariat and working people. Thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals were thrown into jail and handed over to the courts for trial. Terrorist groups roamed across the country, torturing the masses and killing off their leaders. Some 120,000 persons were left without work. Wages and salaries dropped, while the cost of living rose. The foreign policy of the fascist government was also directed against the people's interests and threatened the peril of a military adventure. The Central Committee of the Party deliberated on the alarming situation and took the decision to stage an armed uprising. It was stressed in the resolution that a united front of all anti-fascist forces in the country should be formed.

The Party proceeded to create such a united anti-fascist front. The articles written by Georgi Dimitrov on the united

front at this early juncture (1923) played a most important role. Already then Dimitrov pointed out that by its very essence fascism was not only anti-communist but also anti-democratic, reactionary and completely anti-popular, stressing the supreme necessity of forging a united front for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship. The political and military preparations for the uprising began. A plan of action was worked out. The aim of the uprising was to be the establishment of a government of workers and peasants, based on broad democratic, anti-fascist foundations.

The fascist government hastened to forestall the Party. On September 12 mass arrests were made and the Party clubs were closed. Thereupon the Central Committee took the decision to start the uprising on the night of September 23. But due to provocations on the part of the authorities, the struggle broke out in Stara Zagora and in the village of Muglish on the 12th already. On September 19 Nova Zagora, where Petko Enev was in command, followed suit, joined by the Chirpan and Kazanluk regions. In North-West Bulgaria, where the main rebel forces were concentrated under the command of Georgi Dimitrov and Vassil Kolarov, things went according to schedule and hostilities started on September 23. Many of the villages in the counties of Ferdinand, Berkovitsa, Bela Slatina, Vratsa, Oryahovo and Lom passed into the hands of the revolutionary committees. Ferdinand was captured and the governmental troupes sent from Vratsa to recapture it were beaten off by a fighting detachment headed by Georgi Damyanov, coming from the village of Lopoushna. The Knezha Committee, headed by F. Kozovski and G. Mihailov, galvanized the population of the Bela Slatina and Oryahovo counties into action. In Lom county too, where the detachment of the legendary priest Andrei waged a heroic fight, there was plenty of action. Major engagements took place at the village of Krivodol, while 5,000 rebels under Gavril Genov routed governmental troupes at Boichinovtsi. Many villages followed the call to arms in the counties of Ihtiman, Pazardjik, Panagyurishte and Peshtera. Centres of revolt erupted also in the counties of Bourgas, Turnovo, Varna and Roussé, as well as in the Razlog region. The uprising lasted about a fortnight.

During those heroic days the Bulgarian popular army was born. It received its baptism in battle in the ravines near Krivodol and on the steep mountains of the Balkan range, along the Ogosta river and in countless other heroic engagements all over the country.

Most of these actions, however, were isolated and not properly co-ordinated. The fighting alliance of workers and peasants had not yet become a reality. As a result, the fascist government prevailed in the end. Its reprisals were most inhuman. More than 20,000 perished, most of them exterminated after the end of hostilities: shot, hanged or drowned. Many thousands more were packed in jails, barracks and schools, and cruelly tortured. Many villages were set on fire.

In spite of its failure, however, the September 1923 Uprising is of great historic significance. It created a unity between workers and peasants, opened up a chasm between fascism and the people, illuminated the revolutionary struggle as the only road of salvation from fascism, and raised the prestige of the Communist Party as a leading fighting force in the country.

*The Monarcho-Fascist Regime and the Struggle against It. (1923-41).* After the ruthless suppression of the September Uprising, the government of the country fell into the hands of the reactionary officers and the big landowners in town and countryside. Closely linked with the monarchic institution, they robbed the people and unscrupulously sold the interests of Bulgaria to foreign imperialist powers. Deprived of elementary rights and defence, the masses of the workers and peasants fell prey to bankers and speculators. Unemployment increased and exploitation grew.

The flames of the September Uprising had barely died down, when the country was once again drowned in blood and tears. Availing themselves of a bomb outrage in April 1925 by the ultra left elements, the fascist police engaged in cruel repressions against the communists and all progressive workers, although the attempt was condemned by the Party as a senseless action. In the bloodstained days of April many of the people's beloved sons perished,



and thousands of them were cruelly tortured and cast into prison for long years afterwards. Among these victims were Geo Milev, poet and anti-fascist, who immortalized the people's heroism in the epic September Uprising in his poem «September»; the wonderful lyrical poet and citizen Hristo Yassenov; the poet of the peasant's life of misery, Sergei Roumyantsev, and many others. The people in chains were once more dealt a cruel blow. But the blood-stained trail further deepened the chasm between the masses and the monarcho-fascist dictatorship, making it still more impassable.

Reactionary European circles approved the fascist terror in Bulgaria, but the working people, together with eminent scientists and writers like Einstein, Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse, Bernard Kellermann, Karl Maus, the American journalist, Marcel Villard the French barrister, and many others, condemned the crimes which had been committed, and raised their voices in protest. The Soviet Union sheltered the exiled and persecuted anti-fascist patriots.

The people suffered a reverse. But they were not defeated. The struggle against fascism, for freedom and social justice continued deep underground, under the leadership of the Communist Party. The anti-fascist movement increased greatly during the regime of the so-called People's Bloc in the period of the economic crisis of 1929-34. The country was shaken by powerful strikes. The victory of the Bulgarian Communist Party in the elections for municipal councillors in 1932 was a brilliant anti-fascist demonstration. In an atmosphere of police terror, surrounded on all sides by rifles, bayonets and police truncheons, the proletariat of Sofia voted for the communist candidates. The infuriated rulers cast off their democratic mask. They brutally trampled upon the will of Sofia's working people, annulling the municipal elections and driving the communist councillors out of the municipality.

The victory of Georgi Dimitrov in the Reichstag Fire trial played a decisive part in rallying the people's forces and spreading wide the anti-fascist movement in Bulgaria in this period. From the prisoner's bar Georgi Dimitrov, Bulgaria's great son passed from defence to attack, unmasking with great

force the true anti-popular and militaristic essence of fascism, and calling upon the peoples of the whole world to engage in fearless battle against advancing fascism, for peace and progress.

The Reichstag Fire trial was the first moral and political defeat of fascism, and a great victory for the world proletariat. In the mass movement which grew at the time of the trial, new forms of struggle against fascism and war appeared. It was then that the new application of the tactics of a united front was initiated, the National Anti-Fascist Front, for the union of all patriotic and democratic forces in the common struggle to preserve peace, and for social justice. The popular front in Bulgaria became the first model of the Fatherland Front, under the banner of which the Bulgarian people won their greatest victory on the Ninth of September, 1944.

*The National-Liberation Movement (1941-44).* In 1934 the reactionary forces in Bulgaria established an open fascist dictatorship. The last vestiges of bourgeois democracy were done away with. The blow was aimed primarily at the revolutionary working class movement. The Communist Party fought all through against the baneful policy of the fascist government, which introduced reactionary laws, set up fascist organizations, dissolved the Bulgarian-Soviet associations and on March 1, 1941 dragged Bulgaria onto the nazi bandwagon. This aroused the deep indignation of the people. Two days after Hitler's attack on the U. S. S. R. the Communist Party decided to launch an armed mass struggle. On the 26th the first Partisan detachment was formed under N. Parapounov in Razlog county. Others followed in the counties of Doupnitsa (Stanké Dimitrov), Karlovo (Levskigrad). Batak, Sevlievo and elsewhere. Fighting groups were formed in many towns, which engaged in sabotage on a nation-wide scale.

The plight of the people rapidly grew worse. The nazis plundered the country. At the end of 1941, under German pressure, the government declared a «symbolic war» on the United States and Great Britain, which later retaliated with a number of destructive air-raids.

On the initiative of Georgi Dimitrov, the Fatherland Front was formed in 1942. Fatherland Front committees sprang up as revolutionary organs, becoming embryos of the future people's democratic government. The backbone of the Fatherland Front was the alliance between workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class, uniting all anti-fascist forces. The Fatherland Front organizations became a mainstay of the armed struggle for the overthrow of the monarcho-fascist dictatorship, for breaking off relations with nazi Germany, and entering into an alliance with the Soviet Union and the United Nations. As the Soviet army moved forward like a steamroller, new Partisan detachments sprang up all over Bulgaria: Chavdar in Botevgrad county, Anton Ivanov in the Rhodopes, Hristo Botev in the Sredna Gora, others in the Rila and Pirin mountains, around Trun and elsewhere, followed later by a soldiers' detachment under Dicho Petrov. The revolutionary movement assumed a mass character, with more than 250,000 persons taking an active part in it. The fascist terror was intensified and unheard of atrocities were committed. A special law was voted providing the death penalty even for minors participating in the struggle. Thousands of fearless patriots — revolutionaries, guerillas and their aids — perished in this struggle. 9,415 Partisans and 20,070 persons providing food and shelter for them were killed, while 2,139 houses of anti-fascists were destroyed. The rapid growth of the Partisan movement made it necessary to establish a general staff of the national-liberation army. The country was divided into 12 zones of operation. The government hurled over 100,000 troops and gendarmerie against the Partisans. But with every new nazi setback on the Eastern front the Partisan movement gained new momentum and the faith of the people in final victory became stronger. The course of events clearly foreshadowed the doom of the monarcho-fascist dictatorship and of fascist domination in Bulgaria.

*The September Ninth People's Uprising.* The climax of this struggle for freedom was the great popular uprising

of September 9, 1944. Conditions had matured for the success of such an uprising. On September 5 the U.S.S.R. had declared war on monarcho-fascist Bulgaria, so as to free the country from the Germans. The same day the Communist Party came out with the slogan «All Power to the Fatherland Front!» A strike wave, developing into a general strike, spread over the whole country. In Pleven, Varna, Silistra and other places the masses smashed the prison doors and liberated the political prisoners. The Partisan detachments set out for the larger towns.

On September 8 the armies of the Third Ukrainian Front under Marshal Tolbukhin stepped on Bulgarian soil. This news electrified the whole nation. The people came from many miles away, raised arches of welcome and showered the Soviet troops with flowers and presents. The same day the rebels took over power in many localities. The decisive blow was struck in Sofia between the 8 and 9 of September. Fascist rule had come to an end. The newly established Fatherland Front Government issued a proclamation, announcing that it was immediately proceeding with the implementation of its broad democratic programme.

This historic victory, for which most of the credit goes to the Soviet army, as without its victorious advance Bulgaria would have become an arena of bitter struggles, was a major turning point in Bulgaria's development from capitalism to socialism. Power was wrested for ever from the hands of the bourgeoisie and monarchy, passing over into the hands of the people — the militant alliance of workers, peasants, craftsmen and people's intelligentsia. The dictatorship of the proletariat was set up, popular democratic in form and socialist in content. This uprising, although it solved a number of democratic and anti-imperialist problems left unsolved till then, was bound to shake the very foundations of the capitalist system and to transcend the framework of bourgeois democracy. As a result, the people united in the Fatherland Front and led by the Communist Party became masters of their own destinies, joined the family of the People's Democracies, and unfolded their creative forces for the building up of a socialist society.

*Beginnings of the People's Democracy.* The September 9, 1944 uprising marked the beginning of a People's Democracy as a government of the workers, peasants and progressive intelligentsia. The Fatherland Front programme was published on September 17, containing important anti-fascist and anti-capitalist measures. The cornerstone of the new foreign policy was friendship with the Soviet Union and the settling of all outstanding issues with Bulgaria's Balkan neighbours in a fraternal spirit. In home affairs a number of important people's democratic measures were taken. The bourgeois police was replaced by a popular militia. A revolutionary army was created, reinforced by the fresh currents of the Partisan detachments. All fascist organizations were dissolved, while the Fatherland Front committees became revolutionary organs of popular power. Workers' control was introduced in all factories with the aim of speeding up production, utilizing raw materials rationally, and combating abuses and speculation on the part of the factory-owners. Profits were restricted and prices of industrial goods were fixed. Progressive income tax was applied and thus the financial base of the new order consolidated. The utilization of profits for consumption was limited. Insurance, tobacco and alcoholic beverages became a state monopoly, and private business firms were placed under state control. A land reform was introduced, limiting private ownership of land.

The people's government was also most successful in its foreign policy. On October 28, 1944 an armistice was signed in Moscow with the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain.

*The War against Nazi Germany.* The Fatherland Front Government immediately broke off relations with Germany, declaring war on it. Bulgarian troops passed under the command of Marshal Tolbukhin. The Patriotic War was a continuation of the national-liberation struggle from 1941 to 1944. The newly created popular army, with the Partisan detachments as the welding force, beat off the nazi troops which had attempted to penetrate into Bulgaria at Koula-Vidin, Kyustendil and Piroto. At the end of Septem-

ber Bulgaria already had an army 450,000 men strong, divided into four army groups. Following the Craiova agreement on military collaboration between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the first phase of the liberation war started. On October 8 the Bulgarian army went over to the offensive. With the victorious battles at Sratsin, Koumanovo, Stroumitsa, Podouevo and Kossovo, it successfully completed the task assigned to it: to cut off the nazi road of retreat along the Vardar and Iber rivers. In this way the Bulgarian army contributed to the liberation of Macedonia and Serbia and ensured the southern flank of the Soviet army, which meanwhile smashed the nazis in North Serbia and, together with the Yugoslav Partisans, freed Belgrade, crossed the Danube and pursued the retreating enemy forces.

In December 1944 the 130,000-strong First Bulgarian Army was formed and concentrated in Srem province. It took part in the second phase of the war until the final rout of nazi Germany. At the end of March this army launched a decisive attack against the nazi forces, capturing their last stronghold west of Chakovets, and in May it entered Austrian territory, reaching the Alps and meeting units of the British army which had advanced from the west on May 11 at Klagenfurt.

In this patriotic war Bulgaria lost some 32,000 men. But by its participation in the war it made its contribution to the common victory over nazi Germany. With the blood of the Soviet and Bulgarian soldiers who fell on the battlefields the strong, indestructible Bulgarian-Soviet friendship bond was sealed forever. It was a vital necessity, and the cornerstone in Bulgaria's forward march towards socialism.



## STATE STRUCTURE

The popular democratic social, economic and political system of Bulgaria is the product of a long historical development. More directly it is conditioned by the political and social changes carried out in this country after World War II.

The expulsion of the nazi invaders from Bulgaria and from a number of other Central and South-East European countries was accompanied by a powerful popular movement which carried out radical economic and social changes.

This popular movement for social emancipation turned simultaneously into an uprising against the bourgeois-capitalist order, which in the prewar decades had increasingly assumed the form of an authoritarian government of a small clique in and around the palace, whose aims were alien to the interests of the Bulgarian people.

The establishment of a popular democracy in Bulgaria as a result of the people's uprising of September 9, 1944 represents, at the same time, the logical conclusion of the historic struggles of the Bulgarian people for freedom and democracy. Prior to the national liberation of 1878, during the epoch of Bulgaria's Revival, the best sons of the people, headed by such revolutionaries as Rakovski, Botev and Levski, had come out against every form of tyranny. They dreamt and fought for a «sacred and pure republic».

The popular democratic government released the forces of the people. Socially useful construction began in all spheres of life.

During the very first years of Bulgaria's development as a popular democracy, i. e. from September 9, 1944 to the adoption of the new Constitution at the end of 1947, important changes took place. The basic political change of September 9, 1944 was sanctioned, when in a nation-wide referendum 92.72 per cent of the people voted for the republic, with only 4.24 per cent casting their ballot in favour of the monarchy. At the same time, all exceptional laws were amended, freedom of speech, press and association was restored, the principle of national equality was turned from a legal fiction into a political reality, and women were granted equal rights. A series of measures were introduced, restricting private capitalist exploitation, confiscating all property acquired illegally or as a result of speculation (this measure was aimed primarily at war profiteers), effecting a fairly radical land reform, establishing a state monopoly on tobacco and alcoholic beverages, and adopting the principle of an overall plan for the nation's economic development. All these as well as other measures of an economic, social and cultural character enhanced the role and the self-confidence of the working people who began to feel themselves masters of their labour and architects of their own destinies.



The Constitution of December 5, 1947 legally sanctioned the gains of the Bulgarian people during the first stage and at the same time created a sound foundation for the subsequent development of legislation in a popular democratic direction. That is why Bulgaria's development can be best traced by proceeding from the main constitutional stipulations.

A considerable number of the provisions of the Constitution aim at outlining the social and economic foundations of the popular democratic order established in Bulgaria.

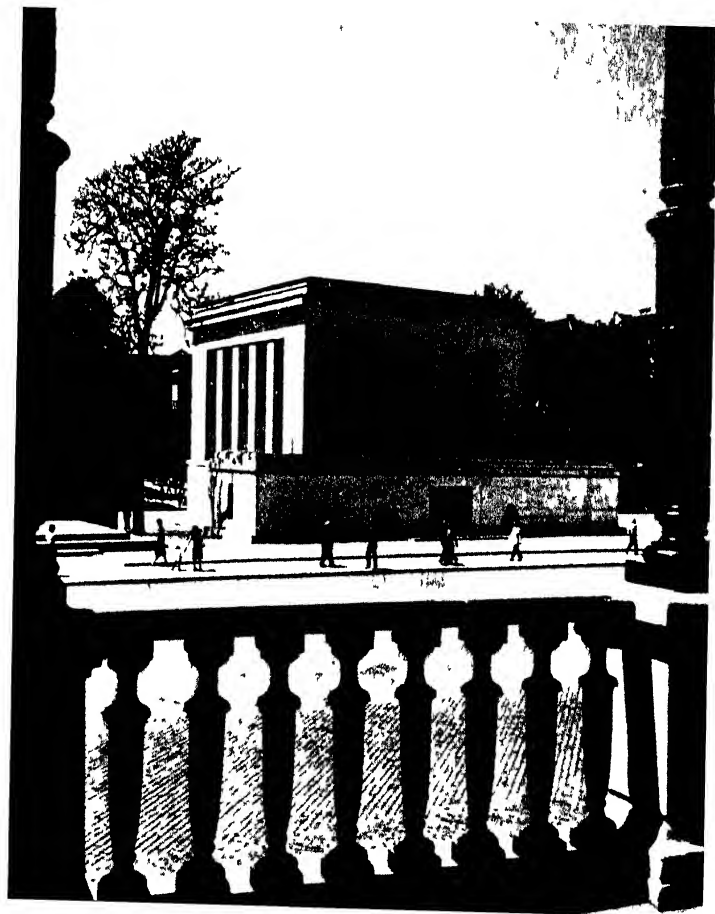
Art. 7 proclaims that all subsoil wealth, forests, waters, sources of natural power, railway and air communications, posts, telegraphs and telephones as well as radio broadcasting are national property, i. e. under public ownership. This ownership was proclaimed as the backbone of the state in the development of the economy. The Constitution confirmed the right of the state to nationalize, completely or partly, certain branches or individual enterprises of industry, trade, transport and credit, and settled the conditions and prerequisites for this. On the basis of these stipulations, immediately after the adoption of the Constitution, industry, mining and banking were socialized.

Along with state ownership, a wide scope is given in the People's Republic of Bulgaria to co-operative ownership and management. The state protects co-operative ownership, assisting and fostering co-operative associations.

Private ownership is not rejected. The state protects private property acquired through work and savings, guarantying its inheritance. As regards the ownership of land, the Constitution proclaims the principle that the land belongs to him who tills it. Private land estates are not permitted.

Public property — state and co-operative — is the foundation, on which the socialist economy in towns and villages is built up, a construction activity quite inconceivable in the past. Heavy and light industry received a powerful impetus, state and co-operative farms sprang up, which effected a veritable revolution in the primitive method of land cultivation inherited from the past.

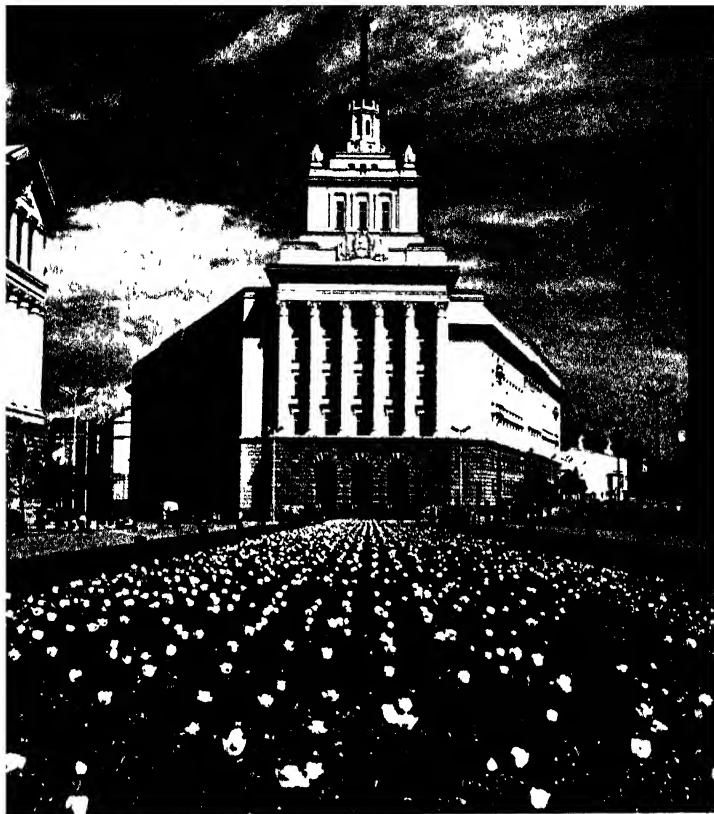
The implementation of the first two Five-Year Plans during this important second period in the development of



*Sofia - the Georgi Dimitrov Mausoleum*



*National Assembly, Sofia*



*Communist Party Headquarters, Sofia*



*At a popular demonstration in defence of peace in Sofia*

popular democracy marked the edification of a socialist economy in townships and rural areas. A most significant shift occurred in the ratio between the volume of industrial and agricultural production from 25:75 in 1939 to 68:32 in 1958. During the years of the First and Second Five-Year Plans socialism triumphed in agriculture as well. Today no less than 92 per cent of the land is owned by co-operative farms. From a backward agrarian country Bulgaria has turned into an industrial-agrarian country with a large-scale mechanized and co-operated agriculture. As a result, all exploitation has been abolished, and social relations now develop on a basis of free labour. Today the country faces the task of the further development of socialist relations. A popular movement has sprung up for the fulfilment of the Third Five-Year Plan much ahead of schedule.

All this became possible thanks to the public foundation of production and the inclusion of the forces of the people in socially useful labour.

In conformity with the social and economic foundation for the edification of a socialist society in Bulgaria, the political provisions of the Constitution bear the imprint of a genuine and broad rule of the people.

Rejecting all compromise solutions of the type of the so-called division of powers, the Bulgarian Constitution proclaims that all power stems from the people and belongs to the people. In practice this is realized by means of representative organs, elected on the basis of general, equal, secret and direct suffrage. The people's representatives in all these organs are directly responsible to their electors and can be recalled by them before their term expires. The electoral principle is applied to the judicial system as well.

The popular democratic character of the state has found its expression in the state organization too. The government of the country is based on representative organs of state power — the National Assembly and the local people's councils.

The National Assembly is a supreme organ, vested with full powers, which radically differs from the old parliament.

It is the nation's sole legislative organ, performing also the functions of constitutional and political control. The Presidium of the National Assembly, especially when the latter is not in session, exercises important functions. It is also vested with foreign and domestic representative rights.

The territory of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is divided into 30 districts with the respective municipalities in their territory. The districts are administrative and economic units — unions of the entire political, state, economic and cultural life of their territory. The state and economic leadership of the territory of the district is in the hands of the respective district people's council and its executive committee.

The municipality is the fundamental administrative unit in the district. The respective municipal (urban or village) people's council is elected on its territory. The fundamental production economic unit of the administrative and economic district in agriculture is the co-operative farm. The fundamental production unit in the field of industry within the territory of the district is the industrial enterprise.

The municipal people's councils are under the district councils, and the latter are under the National Assembly. The practical solution of the tasks connected with the government of the country is entrusted to the Government (Council of Ministers) elected by the National Assembly, and the ministers, and to the executive committees of the people's councils within the territory of the administrative units.

The Council of Ministers is a supreme organ of state government. It directly co-ordinates and directs the entire administrative, economic and cultural activity in the centre and locally, by means of the committees and commissions formed there to this end.

In this way the government of the country is based on the consistent application of the principle of democratic centralism. It makes it possible to combine planned central leadership with the widest unfolding of local initiative.

On the one hand, democratic centralism protects the administration from extreme centralism and bureaucratic excess-

ses and, on the other, overcomes the contradiction between the national government and local autonomous bodies which had existed in the past. Today the people's councils are a centre of genuine self-administration. Their measures are based on state property and fiscal resources, placed at their disposal by the state and quite adequate for their needs. The work of the people's councils is planned within the framework of the overall economic plan, while their budgets form an integral part of the unified state budget.

The state apparatus, both central and local, relies on the wide participation of the population in the administration. This principle stems from the democratic character of the system and from the integral state organization. It finds its expression in the representative composition of the national assembly and of the people's councils as the political foundations of state power, as well as in a number of other forms. The Constitution puts particular stress on the role of the mass organizations. The state benefits from the active collaboration of the professional, economic and public associations and institutes in the framing and execution of the economic plan. In the fulfilment of their tasks, the people's councils rely on the initiative and wide participation of the masses and their political, professional and other organizations.

The overall direction of the political, economic, social and cultural growth of the country lies in the hands of the Communist Party, which unites in its ranks the best representatives of the working people in towns and villages and of the people's intelligentsia.

The rights of the citizens are of essential importance in characterizing the country as a popular democracy. This question is the subject of a separate section in the Constitution.

In the People's Democracy of Bulgaria, where power belongs to the working class in alliance with all peasants, the right to work (Art. 73 of the Constitution) lies at the base of the entire social structure. Labour is a question of honour for every citizen capable of working. Every one is duty-bound to engage in some socially useful work and to work according to his forces and capacities. The state



guarantees the right of work, and payment is made in accordance with the quantity and quality of work performed.

The labour code (1951) created a sound legislative basis for the development and defence of the working rights of the Bulgarian citizen. Every one who works and performs his task precisely and conscientiously may be certain that his right to work will be protected, the right to be paid according to the established rules and norms, the right not to be dismissed arbitrarily. The right to work may also be defended before arbitration commissions and courts.

The right to work, as well as all other rights, applies equally to all citizens by dint of the constitutionally adopted principle of the equality of Bulgarian citizens before the law (Art.71). No privileges, based on nationality, origin, creed or property status, are recognized.

The right to leisure is of great importance in a popular democracy. Its implementation protects the nation's most precious capital — man. The right to leisure consolidates the physical and spiritual forces of the working people; it enables every one to organize his or her life in such a way as to diversify his occupations, enrich his knowledge, and enjoy all the cultural gains of mankind. The actual realization of the right to leisure has changed the very face of our resorts and spas, bringing life and gaiety to mountain dales and seashores.

The right to pensions, grants and indemnities in case of sickness, accident, invalidity and old age has removed the spectre of a future unprovided-for from the working people and their families. Social security embraces ever wider layers of the population. Not only industrial and office workers, but also the members of craft co-operatives and cultural workers, as well as private artisans and merchants may be insured, if they wish to be. A big step forward in the realization of the widest possible social security is the Pension Law for Co-operative Farmers, which was adopted in 1957.

Another major gain for the working people is the free medical aid to which anyone living in Bulgaria is entitled. The existing hospitals, maternity homes, polyclinics, dispensaries, health stations and other health institutions

and services satisfy the needs of public health, bring down the infantile mortality rate, consolidate the health and well-being of the people, and permit the rearing of a strong and healthy young generation. The introduction of free medical aid actually went beyond the provisions of Art. 75 of the Constitution which refers only to accessible medical aid.

Much is being done for the family. Marriage and family are under the protection of the state. Large families enjoy a number of rights and privileges of a fiscal and social character. The rights of the mother are guaranteed by the Constitution. Mothers enjoy special protection as regards work. The state has done much for mother and child care, opening maternity homes, nurseries, kindergartens and dispensaries and granting paid leave of absence to mothers before and after childbirth. Pregnant women enjoy particular rights to work; pregnancy can under no circumstances serve as a pretext for dismissal or refusal to give work to a woman.

The Constitution establishes the right to education of all citizens. Education is free of religious control and is imbued with a democratic and progressive spirit. National minorities enjoy the right of studying in their own languages and of developing their particular culture. Elementary education is general, free of charge and compulsory. Bulgaria ranks among the first countries in the world in literacy as well as in the per capita number of pupils and students.

The political rights and civic liberties of the working people are just as democratic in character and purpose. According to the Constitution, no one can be arrested for more than 48 hours without special order of the courts or prosecutor. Penalties are imposed only on the basis of existing laws. The legal guarantees for the protection of the right of freedom and personal inviolability are being continuously reinforced. The penal code provides for a precisely defined procedure of inquiry and ensures the protection of defendants from the very start of the inquiry.

Freedom of conscience and creed, as well as the right to perform religious rites, is respected and constitutionally guaranteed. The popular democratic state considers religi-

ous convictions as a private matter. Citizens are free to profess any faith or no faith at all. The sole obligation is not to harm others or to threaten public order.

The economic, social and cultural rights of Bulgarian citizens reveal the profoundly democratic character of the order established in our country after September 9, 1944. These rights aim at ensuring the full development of the citizen's physical and spiritual forces, at satisfying their material and cultural needs to an ever greater extent.

New Bulgaria has achieved striking successes in economic, social and cultural construction within an incredibly short time. These successes, along with its policy of peace and international collaboration with all countries, regardless of their social system and government, have enhanced the prestige of Bulgaria and consolidated its place in the world.

Built up on consistent and democratic principles, the People's Republic of Bulgaria has become the personification of the age-old dreams of the Bulgarian people.



## POLITICAL AND MASS ORGANIZATIONS

*The Bulgarian Communist Party.* The Bulgarian Communist Party is a revolutionary Marxist party of a Leninist type, the leading and generally recognized force in the country's entire social, political, economic and cultural life. It was founded as a Social Democratic Party in 1891 at the first congress, summoned on Bouzloudja Peak on the initiative of Dimitar Blagoev, the father of socialism in Bulgaria. As a revolutionary Marxist party of the working

class, the Party took shape under the leadership of Dimiter Blagoev and his comrades-in-arms, Georgi Kirkov and Gavril Genov, in 1903, when it cleansed its ranks of opportunistic elements.

The Bulgarian Communist Party developed in constant struggles against alien petty bourgeois and bourgeois influences to shape the then still young working class as an independent political force with its own ideology and organization. Under the impact of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which was warmly acclaimed by the working people in Bulgaria, the party assumed in 1919 the name of the Bulgarian Communist Party, took part in the founding of the III (Communist) International, of which it remained an active member until that body's dissolution in 1943.

The Bulgarian Communist Party consolidated and matured as a party of a Marxist-Leninist type under the leadership of the great son of the Bulgarian nation, Georgi Dimitrov, and his comrades-in-arms.

Throughout its almost 70-year long arduous yet glorious path, the Bulgarian Communist Party has always been true to the liberating cause of the working class and of the working people, and that is why it has always enjoyed the love and support of the people. The Party has always striven to maintain its ties with the masses, to march forward with them, to educate them in a spirit of uncompromising class struggle and proletarian internationalism, to lead them boldly in the fight for social and economic emancipation, for peace and progress. During the darkest years of the monarcho-fascist dictatorship and nazi occupation it unflinchingly headed the battles against fascism and foreign conquerors, organized and directed the Partisan movement, created the Fatherland Front and by its selfless and correct leadership succeeded in leading the people on to the historic victory of September 9, 1944. Today, under the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Bulgarian people are building up socialism in their own country.

The Bulgarian Communist Party holds aloft the revolutionary banner of Marx-Engels-Lenin, the banner of proletarian internationalism, of peace, democracy and socialism, and fights for international understanding and friendship between all peoples of the earth.

*The Agrarian Union.* The Bulgarian Agrarian Union is a political organization, whose purpose it is to educate its members in a spirit of the principles of popular democracy and to make them participate actively in the edification of a socialist society through co-operative farming.

The Agrarian Union was founded in 1899 as a peasant organization of a professional and educational character. In 1901 it became the political party of the small and middling peasants for the protection and preservation of their interests. It was then that the great democrat and republican Alexander Stamboliiski emerged as its outstanding leader and ideologist.

As a petty bourgeois political party, the Agrarian Union waged a relentless struggle against the bourgeois parties, against the autocracy of Tsar Ferdinand, and against their reactionary domestic and adventurist foreign policy. After World War I, from 1919 to 1923, this party held the reins of government. The Stamboliiski Government carried out a number of economic reforms in favour of the small and middling peasants. These reforms did not affect the foundations of capitalism, but they did restrict the interests of monopoly capital. In its foreign policy this government attempted to eliminate all elements of chauvinism, to fight for good-neighbourly relations and to prevent Bulgaria's use as a springboard for anti-Soviet intervention. The domestic and foreign policy of the Agrarian Government suffered from considerable inconsistency, a typical feature of every petty bourgeois party.

The big bourgeoisie and the monarch loathed the Agrarian Union and its reforms, feared its growing influence among the peasant masses, and on June 9, 1923, staged a coup d'état, overthrowing its government and brutally murdering Stamboliiski. The absence of unity of action between the Agrarian Union and the Communist Party facilitated the success of this coup d'état, in spite of the spontaneous rising of the masses. Both parties drew the proper lesson from this event, which taught them to bring together the forces of the peasantry and proletariat in the struggle against capitalist reaction. In the September 1923 Communist-led uprising the Agrarian Party took an

active part. In the flames of this uprising the granite foundations were laid of a militant alliance between the working class and the working peasants, which later were to form the backbone of the Fatherland Front. The revolutionary committees established in 1923 were the forerunners of the Fatherland Front committees which were created in 1942 in the fight against monarcho-fascism. The local Agrarian branches took an active part in the work of the Fatherland Front committees for the overthrow of the monarcho-fascist rule and for Bulgaria's liberation from the nazi yoke. The working peasants fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the workers for the victory of September 9, 1944. Today they are building a new life -- socialism.

*The Fatherland Front.* The Fatherland Front is a voluntary association of all anti-fascist, democratic and patriotic forces in Bulgaria. It is the country's broadest political mass organization and a prop of the people's rule and its local organs. It is based on an alliance of the working class with the working peasants and people's intelligentsia which, under the leadership of the Communist Party, are today building socialism.

The Fatherland Front was created on the initiative of Georgi Dimitrov during World War II as a revolutionary movement of the broad masses against nazi occupation and fascist-capitalist tyranny and for the establishment of popular democratic rule in Bulgaria.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party and under the banner of the Fatherland Front the uprising of September 9, 1944, was carried out and a popular democratic government was established.

Today the Fatherland Front is an important factor in spreading culture and political education among its members. It collaborates closely with the people's councils and thus helps in bringing the advantages of urbanization, including town-planning and sanitation, to all inhabited localities. Its most active members, enjoying great popularity among the people, are often elected people's representatives or councillors. Through regular meetings with the representatives they have elected, the Fatherland Front

offers its members the opportunity to take an active stand on all vital political, economic and cultural problems and thus to participate even more closely in the building of socialism.

*Trade Unions.* The trade unions are the broadest non-party mass organizations of industrial and office workers, associated on a voluntary basis, regardless of race, nationality, sex or creed.

The trade unions are the chief organizers in the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the economic plans. They actively back all initiatives of the working people aimed at increasing labour productivity, at improving the quality of products, at introducing socialist methods of work in production. They assist in the application of all the valuable proposals of rationalizers and inventors which are likely to ease work and lead to a lowering of cost. The trade unions also perform an important educational function in raising the political and cultural level of the working people and in increasing their qualification through a wide pattern of schools and courses. They likewise attend to all measures tending to increase labour safety and improve the living standards of the people. They protect and defend the interests of the workers when concluding and carrying out collective labour contracts.

The supreme organ of the Bulgarian trade unions is the Central Council, elected for a three-year term at the Trade Union Congress. The trade union committees in the various branches are elected for two-year terms.

*Dimitrov Communist Youth Union.* The Dimitrov Communist Youth Union is the direct successor and continuer of the revolutionary traditions of the Bulgarian Young Communist League from 1919 to 1935 and of the Young Workers' League from 1928 to 1947.

The Bulgarian Komsohmols have a proud record, especially during the glorious September 1923 uprising. The Young Workers' League continued these fine traditions, in particular during the years of the most intense anti-fascist struggle, when it supplied over 70 per cent of the Partisans. Many



of its members were thrown into prison or concentration camps, while many others perished in the fight for freedom. For its feats of heroism in the anti-fascist struggle this organization was proclaimed «Heroic Union» and awarded the People's Freedom medal, 1st degree, 1941-44.

In 1947 the Young Workers' League, the Agrarian Youth Union, the Union of Socialist Youth, the Zveno Youth Union and other youth organizations affiliated to political parties participating in the Fatherland Front merged to form the Dimitrov Union of People's Youth as a broad non-party organization of the working youth. This new organization accomplished a great educational task among the youth, for which it was awarded the September 9, 1944 medal, 1st degree, and performed exploits of labour heroism, for which it was awarded the Gold Medal of Labour. At its 4th Congress in 1958, where it was awarded the Georgi Dimitrov medal for merited work in the unification and communist education of the youth as well as for its active participation in the building of socialism, it assumed its present name.

The Dimitrov Communist Youth Union educates the youth in a spirit of ardent patriotism, of loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and to proletarian internationalism, for the consolidation of Bulgarian-Soviet friendship, for peace and international understanding.

The Septemvriiché Young Pioneer Organization works under the ideological and organizational direction of the Dimitrov Communist Youth Union, its main aim being to educate Bulgarian children and juveniles in a socialist spirit.

The Dimitrov Communist Youth Union works for the fulfilment of the economic plans and organizes the brigade movement. The voluntary labour of youth has helped to build a number of development projects, such as the Republican Pass, the Troyan-Lovech and Pernik-Volouek railway lines, a good part of the new town of Dimitrograd, etc.

Numbering over one million members, this youth organization is a member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, and publishes its own organs: the newspaper *People's*

*Youth*, the magazine *Youth*, and for the children the magazine *Septemvriché*.

*National Committee of Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship.* The National Committee of Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship is the organizer of a mass movement in favour of friendship with the Soviet peoples. Working through a variety of forms, it promotes friendship, better understanding and closer collaboration between the peoples of Bulgaria and the U. S. S. R. Through its cultural, educational and propaganda activity, which finds an expression in lectures, meetings, exhibits, concerts, film shows, and book and film discussions, through the publication of books and visual material, it popularizes the achievements and know-how of the Soviet Union in the construction of communism. In offices and factories, in towns and villages, this committee organizes thousands of free courses in Russian every year.

The National Committee has its branches all over the country: district, city and village committees. It has its own headquarters in one of Sofia's finest buildings, and publishes the magazine *Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship*.

Bulgarian-Soviet friendship is the cornerstone of Bulgaria's foreign and domestic policy on the road of socialist development.



## NATIONAL ECONOMY

*Heritage from the Past.* Prior to the establishment of a People's Democracy on September 9, 1944, Bulgaria was economically one of the most backward countries in Europe. This backwardness was due primarily to the country's complete economic dependence upon the European imperialist powers, which hampered its industrial development and used it as a food farm and raw material appendage.

This economic dependence assumed a particularly harmful aspect during World War II, when nazi Germany, with the aid of the palace and the pro-German local bourgeoisie,

subjected the country to ruthless exploitation and brought it to the brink of economic ruin.

In the past industry was quite underdeveloped. Machine-building and metallurgy were in an embryonic state, and about 80 per cent of all the industrial enterprises were artisan in character. Industry accounted for only 25 per cent of the nation's total volume of production, with 75 per cent going to agriculture. In 1944 industry yielded a mere 7.1 per cent of the national revenue. Power production and mining were weakly developed, in spite of the considerable power resources and underground wealth of the country. Some of these resources were partly exploited by foreign capitalists.

Light industry was in relatively better shape, but its technical equipment was inadequate and obsolete and it lacked the necessary raw materials and semi-finished goods, some 65 per cent of which were imported. Moreover, light industry depended chiefly upon foreign capital.

Agriculture was in a primitive state and relatively unproductive. The land was atomized in some 12 million scattered strips. Almost 70 per cent of the 1.1 million farms possessed less than  $12\frac{1}{2}$  acres of arable land, some 160,000 farms had less than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres, while at the other end only 8 per cent of the farms had over 25 acres.

The technical equipment of agriculture was most rudimentary (550,000 wooden ploughs, and 276,000 with iron ploughshares). Most of the available 3,500 tractors, which belonged to the large landowners, could not be utilized because of the lack of spare parts. Over 200,000 homesteads possessed no draught cattle whatsoever, while another 165,000 had no farm inventory.

As a result of the low technique and the primitive cultivation of the land, crop yields were exceedingly low. Thus, for instance, the yield of wheat, the country's basic grain crop, did not exceed 440-480 kg per acre.

In per capita revenue Bulgaria ranked among the last in Europe.

*Economic Rehabilitation.* The passing of political power into the hands of the people opened up broad vistas for

overcoming the economic backwardness of the country, for consolidating its economic and political independence, for the rapid development of its productive forces, for the progress and prosperity of the people.

Within a few years the nation's economy was extricated from the threat of disaster, the consequences of the war and of nazi pillage were overcome, and the foundations were laid for a continuous, all-round economic upsurge on a previously unknown scale.

The people's government started its task of renovation by seizing the economic levers of command — railways, mining, power stations, post and telegraph, national bank (the latter was nationalized before 1944) — and by establishing a state monopoly on insurance companies and foreign trade with tobacco, alcoholic beverages and other commodities. At the same time, the enterprises owned by nazis or their Bulgarian associates, as well as all property acquired illegally or through speculation, were confiscated. A progressive income tax was introduced.

These and other measures considerably increased the public sector in the nation's economy and strengthened the position and role of the people's democratic state in the economic life of the country. Workers' control was introduced in the privately-owned industrial enterprises, gradually extending to production as well as distribution and price-checking; and this seriously restricted speculation and exploitation on the part of the capitalists.

In the field of agriculture the people's government undertook a number of measures which created the conditions necessary for its rehabilitation and transformation. A land reform was carried out, based on the principle of «the land belongs to those who till it». The maximum amount of land which could be owned by a farmer was fixed at 50 acres, except for the grain-producing Dobroudja province (75 acres). Over 400,000 acres were expropriated from big landowners and some rich monasteries, most of which was allotted to 130,000 landless farmers; the remainder was used to strengthen the few then existing co-operative and state farms.



*Part of the Stalin Chemical Works in Dimitrograd*

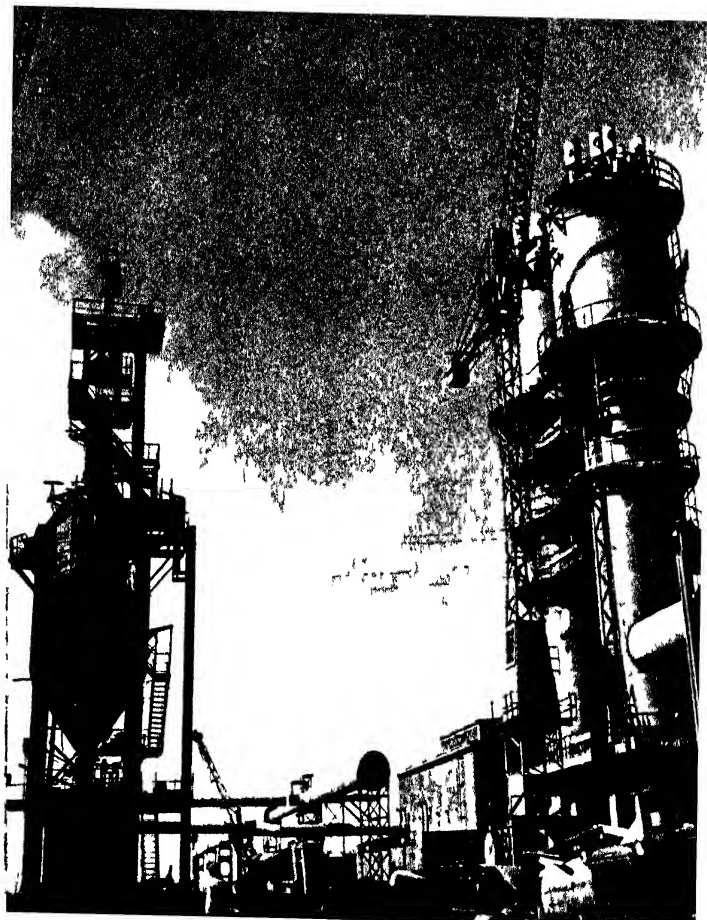


*Stalin Chemical Works, Dimitrograd*



*At one of the new major constructions of the Third Five-Year Plan*





*The Lenin Metallurgical Works the new blast furnaces*

The land reform was followed by a law on the co-operative cultivation of the land and on the creation of machine-tractor stations. This law aimed at speeding up the process of forming co-operative farms in the Bulgarian countryside, a process which had started years earlier as a spontaneous movement among some poor and middling peasants.

These historic measures enabled the state to regulate the economic life of the country more completely, to canalize it properly and transform it in accordance with the nation's interests.

The Two-Year Plan, adopted by the Grand National Assembly in 1947, marked the start of Bulgaria's planned economic development. Its three main aims were to rehabilitate the economy, to attain and surpass the prewar levels in all its branches, and to speed up the development of production. New industrial enterprises were to be built, power and coal output were to be raised, agriculture was to be mechanized, and transport as well as foreign and home trade were to be expanded.

At the end of December 1947, industrial enterprises, banks and mining were nationalized. As a result of this historic and truly revolutionary measure, 94 per cent of the country's productive capacities became public property. The planning principle could thus be fully applied to the nation's economy and favourable conditions were created for Bulgaria's socialist industrialization.

The goals of the Two-Year Plan were overfulfilled: the prewar level of production was topped by 71 per cent, including a more than twofold increase in the foremost branches of mining.

The year 1948 marked the successful close of the period of economic rehabilitation.

*The First Five-Year Plan.* The successful fulfilment of the Two-Year Plan created the prerequisites for the country's further development on a planned basis. On the initiative of the V Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party and under the guidance of Georgi Dimitrov, the directives for the First Five-Year Plan were worked out.

With the launching of the First Five-Year Plan, 1948-53, Bulgaria's entire economy was subordinated to an overall plan. The main economic and political goals of this plan were the building up of the economic and cultural foundations of socialism in Bulgaria by means of the country's industrialization and electrification and the mechanization and co-operation of its agriculture and crafts.

In the broad programme for the industrialization and electrification of the country the chief emphasis was put on the different branches of heavy industry — machine-building, power output, metallurgy, chemical industry — which rank priority and grow at a faster pace than light industry.

The plan provided for essential structural changes within the economy: the ratio between industry (without crafts and local industry) and agriculture was to change from 39:60 in 1948 to 47:53 in 1953, with a respective change in the ratio between heavy and light industry from 37:63 to 45:55.

The volume of industrial production was to attain a level about four times as high as the prewar level. In the field of agriculture the main task was the creation of new co-operative farms and their equipment with modern technique.

High targets were set for the expansion and development of the railway, water and air transport, as well as of the different branches of communications. The national revenue was expected to double the 1939 figure.

This exceedingly ambitious economic programme required considerable funds. Machine-building, metallurgical and chemical plants had to be built, as well as power stations, dams, new mines, office buildings, apartment and other residential houses, etc. Part of the 13,000 million leva necessary for the implementation of this programme could be taken from the national revenue and the country's internal resources. The machinery and equipment for the construction work had to be financed by increased exports.

Yet Bulgaria would have been unable to meet these huge expenditures for its industrialization and electrification without the aid of the East European People's Democracies and, above all, without Soviet aid. Relying, first and foremost, on unstinted Soviet aid, Bulgaria successfully sur-

mounted all obstacles in the way of its socialist development.

In accordance with the main tasks of the Five-Year Plan, capital investments were distributed as follows between the different branches: nearly half (47 per cent) went to industry, while the remainder was split approximately into three, between agriculture, transport, and trade plus cultural development.

The country's productive forces developed by leaps and bounds. The Five-Year Plan was carried out within four years. At the end of 1952 the volume of industrial production was more than four times as high as in 1939.

The successes won in industry created a solid base for the country's further industrialization and for supplying agriculture with the necessary technique and fertilizers, and gave a strong impulse to the development of the co-operative movement. Over half of the total number of farm households (60.5 per cent) joined co-operative farms, which became highly mechanized collective enterprises, ensuring considerably greater crop yields than those of the individual farmers. The ratio between industrial and farm output changed even more in favour of industry than expected. The national revenue increased by 50 per cent over the prewar 1939 level. Bulgaria had made a historic leap in its economic development.

The structural changes in the economy led to corresponding social and class changes. The socialist forms (public and co-operative sectors) became dominant in the nation's economy.

The working class, forever freed from exploitation, became the dominant class. It increased in numbers, as well as in political and labour activity. The farmhand disappeared from the countryside, while the koulaks as a class were strongly restricted in their activities by a number of laws and other measures. Throughout the country socialist emulation and shockwork spread as a movement. Between 1949 and 1953, 12,617 working people were awarded medals, 515 received the Dimitrov Prize, while 52 were proclaimed Heroes of Socialist Labour.

The fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule produced the expected results: the groundwork of socialism was laid, and conditions were created for the country's rapid economic progress as well as for a substantial improvement of the material and cultural standards of the people.

*The Second Five-Year Plan.* The main aims of the Second Five-Year Plan were to continue Bulgaria's industrialization, with heavy industry being given the priority, and further to develop the co-operation of agriculture, and on this twin foundation to further improve the general standard of living.

In the field of industry, attention was mainly focussed on the development of power, coal and non-ferrous metallurgy, as well as on continuously increasing the production of consumer goods.

The scope of the construction programme can be seen from the fact that the total capital investment amounted to some 20,000 million leva, i. e. twice as much as during the First Five-Year Plan. More than half of this sum was invested in industry, with coal alone receiving four times as much investment. As a result, the basic funds of industry doubled in comparison with 1952, while industrial output increased by over 76 per cent.

Coal and power output increased considerably. Whereas in 1952 the country had suffered from a shortage of electrical power, by the end of 1957 the economy could boast of certain reserve capacities. Coal output climbed to almost 12 million tons in 1957, sufficient to meet both the requirements of the economy and the people's domestic needs. In this way the existing discrepancy between the production and consumption of coal and power was eliminated. Rapid progress was also accomplished in the development of ferrous and particularly of non-ferrous metallurgy, of machine-building, the heavy chemical and electro-technical industries, as well as of certain branches of the light and food industries. Total industrial production in 1957, the final year of the Second Five-Year Plan, was eight times as high as in 1939.

Industry as a whole underwent major structural changes: the ratio between heavy and light industry switched from 23:77 in 1939 to 45:55 in 1957. Even more pronounced was the switch in the ratio between industrial and agricultural production: from 25:75 in 1939 to 68:32 in 1957.

Impressive results were obtained in the field of agriculture during the period under review. The co-operative movement spread like wildfire throughout the country. By 1957 no less than 92 per cent of all the arable land was pooled in co-operative farms. The only farms to remain outside were a few in the mountainous and hilly regions. Thus, the socialist transformation of the countryside was victoriously completed.

Today agriculture possesses a considerable technical base. The number of tractors (in units of 15 hp) increased from 12,295 in 1952 to 27,190 in 1957, and that of combines from 1,363 to 4,334. All the basic agricultural operations have been mechanized. Fertilization per land unit doubled in comparison with that of the First Five-Year Plan.

The socialist transformation of agriculture, the continuous extension of mechanization and the application of new agrotechnical measures resulted not only in higher overall output but also in higher yields per acre. The pre-war yields of the staple crops have been far surpassed. At the end of 1957 the volume of agricultural output was 26.6 per cent higher than in 1952.

The co-operative farms are now undergoing a salutary process of consolidation, turning into viable large-scale mechanized socialist farms, thus helping to ensure the rapid and steady development of the productive forces. As a result of this process of consolidation, agricultural output has increased substantially, and this in turn has led to higher incomes for the co-operative farmers.

The triumph of the socialist relations of production in the economy as a whole has opened up wide vistas for the rapid development of the productive forces, for economic and cultural progress. Bulgaria, the backward agrarian country of yesterday, has today become a fairly advanced socialist country with a well-balanced industry and agriculture, with large-scale, co-operative and mechanized farming.

The national revenue increased during the Second Five-Year Plan at an annual rate of 9 per cent, attaining a level twice as high as that of 1939. Whereas in the past the bulk of the national revenue was pocketed by a minority, today it all belongs to the people: in 1957 about 78 per cent of this revenue was spent for the direct or indirect satisfaction of the population's needs, while some 22 per cent went for the further development of the economy, of science, culture, public health, etc.

In the wake of these accomplishments, the real income of the population increased by 55 per cent during the Second Five-Year Plan.

The successful implementation of the two five-year plans did away with the basic conditions for the exploitation of man by man in town and village. Today Bulgarian society consists of two non-antagonistic classes, which are socialist in character: workers and co-operative farmers, with the people's intelligentsia which is intimately linked to them. These classes are now consciously and actively building up the new life in the country.

Drawing up a general balance-sheet, we are entitled to conclude that socialism as a new social system now prevails in Bulgaria, that the transition from capitalist to socialist relations of production has been completed. A sound foundation has been created for the further comprehensive upsurge in the economy and culture, for the continuous rise of the general standard of living.

*Economic Planning.* Bulgaria's economy, as in all the other socialist countries, is a planned one. The principle of overall planning and management constitutes the paramount feature of the economic organization of a socialist state.

The basic prerequisite for the planning of the Bulgarian economy is the public ownership of the means of production. The socialization of the means of production removed the economic foundation of boom-and-slump cycles and anarchy in production and created the conditions for the emergence and functioning of the law on the uniform proportional development of the economy. Planning creates conditions

which ensure the necessary proportional distribution both of manpower and the means of production between different branches of the economy. The character of these proportions in Bulgaria's economy is determined, above all, by the requirements of the basic production on the basis of advanced technique as well as a systematic rise in living standards.

This necessary proportional principle in the Bulgarian economy can only be founded upon the establishment of the correct proportions in the development of all the different branches: as between industry, agriculture and transport, between the extraction and the processing industries, between the components of each branch, as well as between production and consumption in general.

The first proportion to be established in the economic development is the proper ratio between the production of capital goods and that of consumer goods. To fix the ratio correctly between these two subdivisions of socialized production, it is necessary to observe the law of priority development of the production of capital goods. The proper proportion requires the priority development of the branches turning out capital goods, and in the first place heavy industry and its hard core — machine-building, since this is the foundation for the flowering of all other branches of the national economy, as well as for the fuller satisfaction of the growing material and cultural needs of the population.

Socialist planning is based on strict scientific foundations. It requires a constant generalization of the practice of socialist construction and the utilization of all the achievements of science and technology. The planning principle of a nation's economy is connected with scientific prevision. It is based on a knowledge of objective economic laws.

The planned development of the Bulgarian economy proceeds on the foundations of the Leninist principle of democratic centralism. This principle presupposes the combination of a centralized planned direction of the economy with a maximum development of the creative activity of the working people and the granting of the necessary local autonomy and initiative.



The socialist planning of the economy is effected through long-range and short-range plans. The former are usually five-year plans, and these are subdivided into annual plans. Proceeding from the action of the economic laws of socialism, generalizing the principles of economic and cultural construction, and taking into consideration the country's internal conditions of life and its external relationships, the socialist state raises the most important economic and political tasks of the state plans at every stage.

The long-range plans express the basic line of economic development during the stated period, while the current plans represent a specific business programme for one year.

But socialist planning has a mobilizing character. The ratios in the economic development are not immutable factors. Every plan is specified, modified and perfected in the process of implementation, based on the experience of the masses. Whether a production plan is realistic depends to a great extent on the vital creative activity of the masses.

The profoundly scientific and realistic character of socialist planning and its co-ordination on a socialist world scale ensure the crisis-free development and continuous progress of Bulgaria's economy.

The attainment of the targets of every long-range state plan always represents a step forward in the development of Bulgaria's economy and in raising the general standard of living. All industrial and office workers, peasants, artisans and intellectuals, the forces of the entire nation work with creative energy and patriotic enthusiasm for the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the plans.

*Power — Natural Resources — Industry.* Bulgaria's industrialization and electrification, as well as the mechanization and electrification of its agriculture, required a prompt and extensive tapping of its natural resources and especially of its power resources — water power, coal and oil.

In the past both Bulgarian and foreign scientists had claimed that Bulgaria lacked such resources. But the popular democratic government proved this to be untrue. As a result of thorough-going nation-wide prospecting with

the aid of experienced Soviet geologists, an activity for which considerable funds were set aside annually, substantial deposits of iron, coal and ferrous metals were discovered. This was followed up by the discovery of what today is generally considered the most precious natural resource — oil. As a result, a solid raw material base was created for the development of heavy industry.

*Power.* In view of its exceptional importance to the country's accelerated industrialization and to the mechanization and intensification of its agriculture, substantial funds were earmarked for the expansion of power output. In the Second Five-Year Plan, for instance, no less than 15 per cent of all capital investment in the nation's economy were set aside for this purpose. The main efforts were directed towards the expansion of water resources, on the one hand, and towards the intensified production of coal, on the other.

As a result of intensified water construction, ten major dams were built and commissioned, including the Petrohan hydro-cascade and the Batak hydro-electric power system — the most important development project of the Second Five-Year Plan. Power stations and plants were built at these dams. A number of smaller hydro-electric power stations were built on various rivers.

A number of major thermal power plants were built as well, some of which have a capacity of more than 50,000 kw as, for instance, Republica, Stalin, and Maritsa III. Thanks to this intensified and large-scale construction of power stations, power output in 1957 reached 2,656 million kw/h. The network of transmission lines was also considerably extended. In 1957 about two thirds of the power was produced by the thermal power plants. New hydro-electric power stations are to be commissioned in the near future. At the end of 1957 power output was twice as high as in 1952 and ten times as high as in 1939. On a per capita basis, the increase was from 42 kw/h in 1939 to 347 kw/h in 1957. Electricity has been brought to the Bulgarian village: in the past 12 years the lights went on in some 2,500 villages, while in the whole period of bourgeois rule, stretching

over almost seven decades, only 791 villages were provided with electricity.

The water resources of the Rila-Rhodope massif and the low-caloric lignite coal of the Maritsa basin are today considered Bulgaria's main sources of power development.

With Soviet aid Bulgaria will soon start to build atomic power stations.

*Coal.* Coal is the foremost power resource for the country's industrialization and electrification. That is why the increase of coal output rates high priority in the five-year plans. Four kinds of coal are produced in Bulgaria: lignite, brown, black and anthracite. Economically the most important is brown coal, accounting for over half of the total coal output. The foremost brown coal basin is that of Dimitrovo in Western Bulgaria.

In order to speed up coal output, measures were taken already in the First Five-Year Plan not only to expand the Dimitrovo basin but also to discover and exploit new basins — those of Bobov Dol, Sofia and especially of Maritsa; the last-named is the chief source of lignite coal. Recently very rich lignite coal deposits have been discovered, the exploitation of which is being rapidly pushed forward. Their importance for the nation's fuel balance is also growing rapidly: during the past decade their share in total coal output has doubled, reaching 27.4 per cent.

The following figures show the rapid progress accomplished in this field. Coal output, which in 1939 stood at 2.2 million tons, reached 7.4 million tons in 1952, and in 1957 approached the 12-million mark, i. e. a more than five-fold increase over the prewar level. One of the factors which greatly contributed to this success, is the introduction of new technique in the pits. Today domestic needs are being met, leaving a sizable surplus for export.

*Ore Mining.* In the past Bulgaria was considered a country poor in ores. Today we know better. The rich ore deposits discovered since 1944 are now being tapped. As a result, this country has today its own ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy.

First in importance rank lead and zinc ores. During the years of the Second Five-Year Plan the exploitation of the Rhodope basin was commenced, flotation factories and cable-lines were built. New miners' settlements have sprung up in the mountains: Roudozem, Madan, Batantsi and Strashimir. Today the Madan-Roudozem mining basin alone produces 12 times as much lead and zinc ores as Bulgaria's total ore output in 1939. In this region, in the town of Kurdjali, the first lead and zinc works were built, which in 1957 produced 7,000 tons of zinc, 12,000 tons of lead and 11,000 tons of sulphuric acid. After its expansion in the near future the production capacity will be doubled, and later a second lead and zinc plant with an annual capacity of 30,000 tons of zinc will be built. In 1958 a powerful copper smelter and refinery was built, which is now being expanded.

The main centre of the country's ferrous metallurgy is the Lenin Metallurgical Works with a present annual output of 160,000 tons of steel, 56,000 tons of cast iron and 117,000 tons of rolled sheet iron. With the tapping of the newly-discovered major iron deposits in the Sofia region, the construction of an even larger metallurgical plant was launched, the initial capacity of which was set at about 300,000 tons of cast iron, 450,000 tons of steel and 300,000 tons of rolled sheet iron.

*Machine-Building.* In the past Bulgaria's machine-building enterprises were semi-artisan in character, equipped with obsolescent universal machines and devoid of any mechanization. Within a mere decade, from 1948 to 1958, the machine-building industry has made big strides forward, adopting the production of hundreds of different machines and machine tools, which in the past were imported. Today this country has its own plants turning out lathes and other machine tools, all farm machines except tractors, automobile and tractor spares, refrigerator installations and sets, mining and metallurgical equipment, ships, railway waggon, etc.

Substantial progress was recorded by the electro-technical industry, which turns out electric motors, transformers, generators, radio sets, electric meters and various other arti-

cles. In 1957 alone, it produced some 111,000 electric motors.

Local machine-building today meets a large part of the requirements of industry, construction, agriculture, and other branches of the economy, supplying them with machinery, equipment and spares. A substantial part of the industrial production is marketed abroad. In the Varna shipyards vessels are built and repaired for a number of countries. Recently the production of motorcycles, home refrigerators, ultramodern lathes and other articles was launched.

*Chemical Industry.* The heavy chemical industry is an important link in socialist industrialization and in the intensification of agriculture. The foundations of this industry were laid during the years of the First Five-Year Plan. It was then that the Chemical Works in Dimitrograd were built with Soviet aid; in 1957 it produced over 125,000 tons of nitrogen fertilizers, over 20,000 tons of sulphuric acid and various other chemicals. During the Second Five-Year Plan the Karl Marx Soda Plant was built, with an annual capacity of 64,000 tons of soda ash and 10,000 tons of caustic soda, as well as the plant for superphosphate fertilizers with a capacity of 100,000 tons, the cellulose works, the rosin factory, etc.

With a view to speeding up the progress of agriculture, particular attention is devoted to the production of nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers, which is increasing from year to year. Other branches of industry which made pronounced progress are those turning out precision medical instruments, drugs and preparations, such as penicillin, aureomycin and others, which in the past were imported from abroad.

*Light and Food Industry.* Parallel with the accelerated development of heavy industry, the light and food industry is making good headway. The expansion of these branches is a prerequisite for the plentiful production of consumer goods, for a pronounced rise in the general standard of life. During the First and Second Five-Year Plans scores of processing plants and factories were built, including

the Ernst Thälmann Textile Mill in Sofia, the Balkan Textile Mill in Sliven, the Maritsa Textile Mill in Plovdiv, shoe, leather and filature factories, the Gavril Genov Food Works, six bread factories, nine packing houses, 22 wine cellars, many refrigerator plants and canneries, a plant for pectin production, etc. At the same time, many of the existing enterprises were overhauled, expanded and modernized.

In 1957 the textile industry produced in 70 days as much as the total annual output in 1939. The production of shoes increased 18 times, that of household porcelain goods — ten times, and of furniture — nine times.

The increase in volume of production was accompanied by a broadening of assortment and an improvement of quality. Thus, for instance, in 1957 alone the woollen industry launched the production of 57 new types of fabrics in 971 designs and patterns and 2,574 colour combinations. The silk industry produced 56 new woven coloured designs in 197 colour combinations and 320 printed designs in 1,852 colour combinations, the cotton industry — 15 new types in 359 designs and 829 colour combinations.

The output of the canning industry in 1957 was eight times as high as in 1948 and 13 times as high as in 1939, turning out over 120 different articles; it processes primarily local fruits and vegetables, fish and meat. The processing of meat increased sharply too.

The local fish industry already disposes of modern fishing and transport vessels, equipped for deep-sea fishing. The processing of fish is continuously expanding.

Dairy farming is also assuming an increased importance. In 1956 some 200 million litres of milk were processed into butter and cheese, products which enjoy a high reputation on foreign markets.

In the past the wine and brewery industry was in the hands of 1,300 private firms. Today it is concentrated in 38 large, modernly equipped state enterprises. The bread industry produces 67 kinds of bread articles.

*Agriculture.* The total arable land of Bulgaria amounts to about 12 million acres, 82 per cent of which (9.8 million

acres) is cultivated land, while the remainder consists of fallow, meadows, vineyards, etc. The chief crop is grain, accounting for over two thirds of the total cultivated land. It is most important not only as human food and animal feed but also as a raw material source for industry. Next come industrial crops, followed by fodder crops, orchards and market gardens.

First among the cereals ranks wheat, to which 34.5 per cent of all the cultivated land was sown in 1955. Next comes maize with 18.7 per cent, followed by barley with 7.3 per cent; rye, oats and rice cover less acreage. In per capita output and acreage of maize Bulgaria ranks among the first countries in Europe.

With the socialist transformation of agriculture and its intensification, certain changes occurred in the structure of the country's cultivated land as well as in the ratio between the different crops. The fallow and grain acreage, which in the past showed an upward trend, was reduced by 10 per cent, while the acreage of industrial and fodder crops, as well as of orchards, vineyards and market gardens, was increased. The volume of grain output, though, increased considerably. As a result of the mechanization and intensification of agriculture, yields per acre are continuously rising.

*Industrial Crops.* The relative share of industrial crops in the cultivated area of co-operative farms increased from 12.3 per cent in 1948 to 13.5 per cent in 1956, while that of fodder crops increased from 9.3 to 12.2 per cent.

The state does its utmost to promote the development of the intensive crops and to increase their yield per acre, not only because they are of great importance to the light and food industry but also because their high profitability secures a high remuneration for the farmers.

Bulgaria's leading industrial crops are tobacco, oiliferous and fibrous plants, and sugar beet. Tobacco ranks far and away first, ensuring a livelihood to about 10 per cent of the total population and accounting for some 30 per cent of the value of total exports.

Tobacco grows in practically every region of the country. The most valuable varieties are Basma and Djebel Basma, which are in great demand on foreign markets on account of their low nicotine content, excellent flavour and superb aroma.

Among oiliferous plants the sunflower ranks first, accounting for over 80 per cent of all the land sown to these crops. From the rose, cultivated primarily in the Levskigrad and Kazanluk areas of the Rose Valley, the world-famous rose attar is obtained.

The most important fibrous plant is cotton, the production of which meets domestic needs.

*Fruit-Growing — Viticulture — Market Gardening.* There has also been a marked increase in the acreage and yields of the other intensive branches of agriculture — market gardening, fruit-growing and viticulture. These play an important role in the nation's economy, in particular in its foreign trade. Bulgarian gardeners enjoy a high reputation in many foreign lands. In profitableness market gardening ranks second only to tobacco-growing. Bulgarian tomatoes, red peppers and other vegetables are valued highly on foreign markets because of their fine taste, luscious appearance and high vitamin content. Bulgarian fruits too — apples, pears, peaches and various berries — are most delicious.

Bulgaria's fame as a land of vineyards goes back to antiquity. Even then grapes, together with other fruits and vegetables, were the chief food of the population. Today vineyards provide the basic or only livelihood in about 35 per cent of all co-operative farms.

In view of the exceptional importance of the intensive branches, recently a long-range plan has been worked out for the development of fruit-growing, viticulture and market gardening until 1970. By 1970 the production of these three crops is expected to be three times as high as in 1956.

*Stockbreeding.* The state plans fix the capital investments and provide for important measures to speed up the development of stockbreeding. Today the main at-



tention is concentrated on a rapid increase of fodder output, which should lead to a rapid rise in the number of farm animals and in their productivity. Today practically all co-operative farms have big livestock sectors (cattle, pig and poultry) and some of them have horse-breeding farms. The number of farm animals per 1,000 acres has increased substantially during the Second Five-Year Plan, as have the milk yield of cows, the wool yield of sheep and the egg-laying capacity of hens and other fowl.

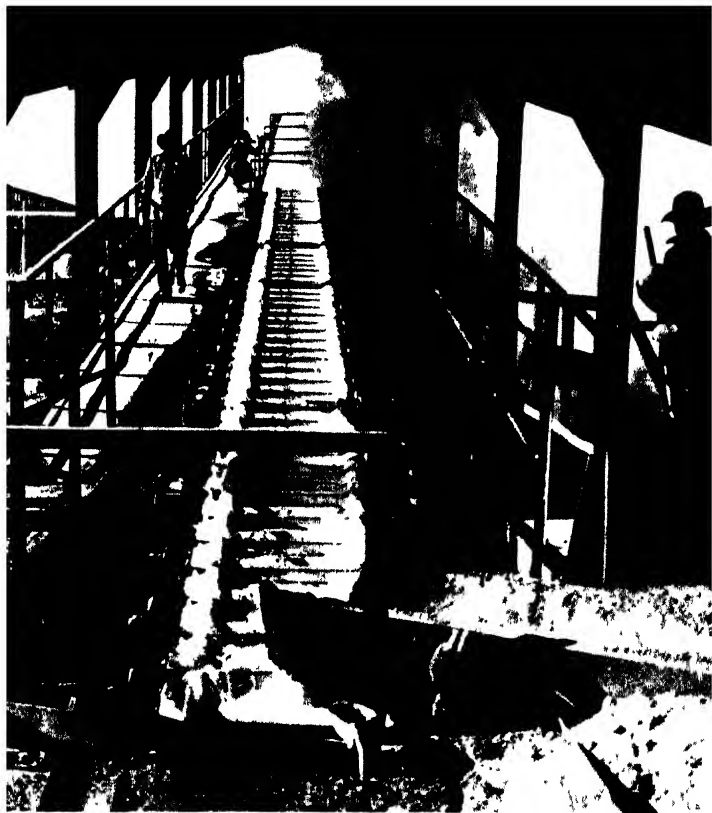
Bulgaria's agriculture is now socialist in character. Instead of the former 11 million private farms, most of which were minute and vegetated under sub-standard conditions, there are now about 1000 co-operative farms and 49 state farms. In addition, there are 209 machine-tractor stations, with a large farm rolling stock, including some 24,000 tractors (in units of 15 hp) and more than 4,300 combines.

The mechanization of the basic field work is increasing from year to year. In 1956 deep autumn ploughing was almost completely (99.9 per cent) mechanized, while sowing had reached 75.5 per cent and harrowing 82 per cent of mechanization.

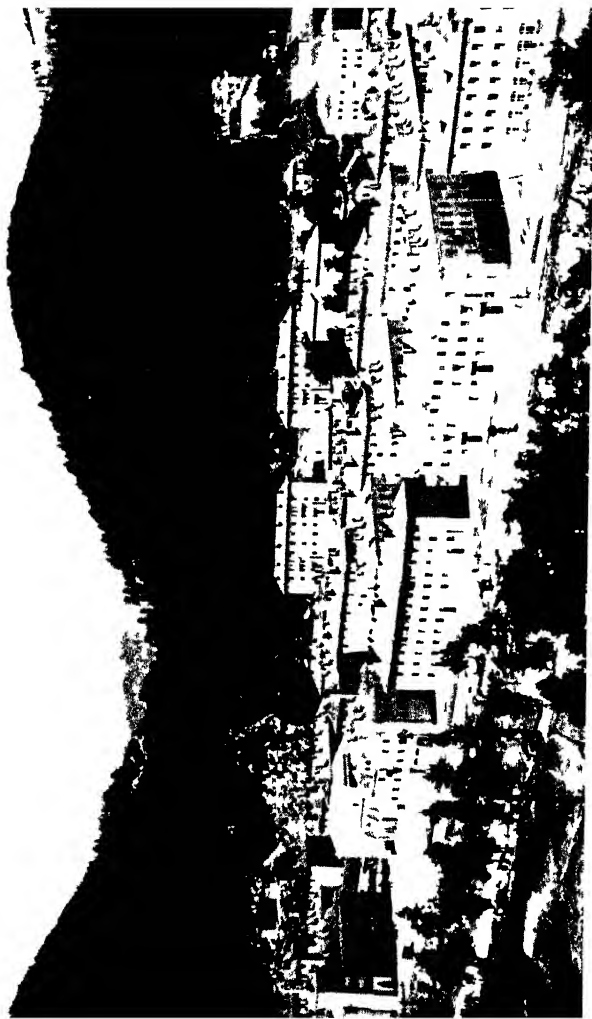
Irrigated acreage has increased appreciably, thanks to the large-scale water power construction activity by the state as well as by the co-operative farms themselves, which, on their own initiative, tapped the local water resources by building small dams. In 1957 more than 750,000 acres were irrigated, and in 1960 the total irrigated acreage is expected to reach one third of all cultivated lands suitable for watering. No less marked is the steady rise in the use of mineral fertilizers.

All these measures have led to a rapid rise in yields per acre. Thus, for instance, in the years of the Second Five-Year Plan (1953-57), as compared to the First (1949-52), the production of maize has increased by 53.4 per cent, of unginned cotton by 61.7 per cent, and of Oriental tobacco by 26.7 per cent.

The successes of the co-operative farms have resulted in much higher revenues. The average income of a co-operative farm household has increased from 2,268 leva in



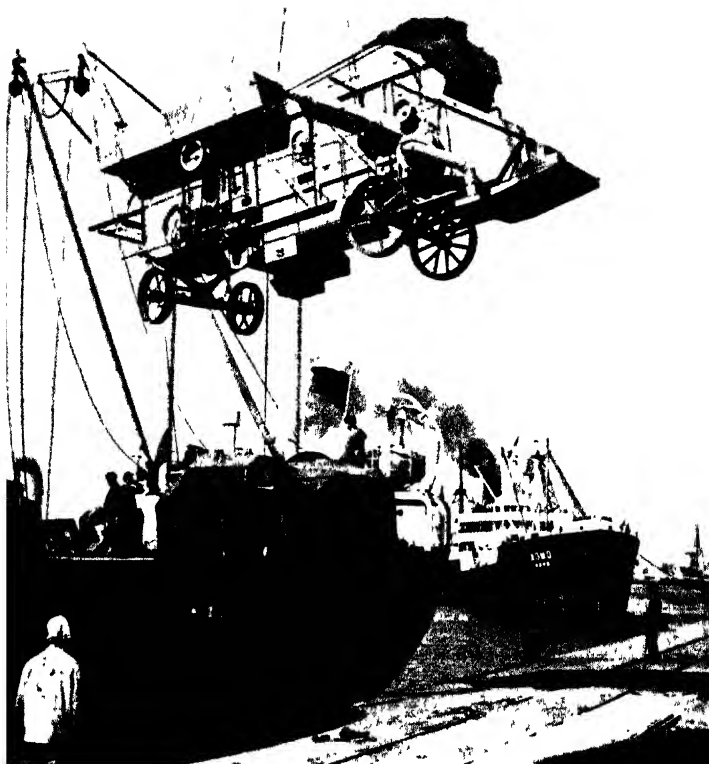
*In the Lenin Metallurgical Works*



*A modern housing project in Roudozem Rhodope mining basin*



*At the Varna Shipyards*



*t the port of Bourgas: loading Bulgarian-made threshing machines  
for export to the Arabian East*

1950 (counting only the public sector and excluding the private lot) to 6,666 leva in 1957, while the average remuneration of a work day has risen from 8.55 leva in 1954 to 17.44 leva in 1957. In addition, the co-operative farmers earn a fairly good amount on the lot reserved for their private use as well as by subsidiary occupations. Finally, all the older members of the co-operative farms are granted state pensions.

The victory of the socialist system in the countryside has brought in its wake a general upsurge of agricultural production, of the material and cultural standards of living of the peasants.

*Transport.* While all four branches of transport — rail, air, road and water — are fairly well developed in Bulgaria, railway transport is by far the most important, accounting for the bulk of freight and passenger traffic.

In the past the railways used to be a sore point, and much has been done during the past decade to improve the situation here. The rolling stock and the tracks have been overhauled and partly renewed, the stations and depots have been modernized. Hundreds of kilometres of new railway lines have been built. The volume of transport of ores, building materials, coal, fuel and other goods has increased several times over in comparison with 1939. Machine-building for transport has developed. In Sofia, Bourgas and Dryanovo three large factories for the manufacture and repair of rolling stock have sprung up.

The other branches of transport have also made good progress. Bulgaria now has its own merchant fleet. Among its new Black Sea ships there are two of about 10,000 tons. The Danubian river fleet is also rapidly expanding. The development of water transport has been considerably stimulated by the Varna shipyards, which recently were thoroughly overhauled, modernized and enlarged, and particularly by its new dry dock — the pride of Bulgarian shipbuilding — as well as by the dock and shipyards in Rousse.

With the extension and modernization of the road network and the construction of two modern auto-repair factories

in Sofia and Plovdiv, the nation's highway system is rapidly picking up momentum.

Although only 11 years old, Bulgaria's air transport has already become an important factor in the country's economic life. The airplanes of the civil aviation service are used for the export of goods, the sanitary aviation is making rapid headway, as is agricultural aviation for fertilization, spraying, and for combating plant pests.

*Trade.* Trade in Bulgaria is virtually socialist, i. e. state and co-operative market. It develops on the basis of the general state plan. Its main function is to satisfy the needs of the population ever more completely.

*Home Trade.* Socialist trade is a result of the successful socialist development of the country during the 1948-57 decade, when the two five-year plans were fulfilled and socialist relations of production became predominant in the whole economy. The three main sectors of trade developed as follows between 1948 and 1957 (in percentage of the total): state sector — from 25.3 to 53.8, co-operative sector — from 43.5 to 45.8; and private sector — from 32.1 to 0.4.

Domestic trade comprises only consumer goods, for capital goods — machinery, means of transport, raw materials and other goods necessary to industry do not form part of its activity. The enterprises and departments receive these commodities through the State Supply Service or directly through the import and production enterprises.

Domestic trade is effected through a system of trade supply and purchase centres, which are handled by the district people's councils and the Ministry of Trade.

Co-operative market trade in towns and cities is effected by the co-operative farms at special markets, where they sell their surplus farm produce.

The economic progress and the continuous rise in the general standard of life has led to a big expansion of trade: in 1957 the population purchased three times as much consumer goods as in 1948. The six consecutive price reductions have provided a powerful stimulus to trade.

*Foreign Trade.* Foreign trade is a state monopoly. It is handled by the Ministry of Trade through special import and export enterprises. Through foreign trade Bulgaria secures the machinery, equipment and raw materials necessary to its economic development, as well as consumer goods for the population.

The rapid increase in industrial and agricultural production have provided a secure foundation for the development of foreign trade. The rise in the country's commodity stocks, both in quantity and assortment, has substantially improved its export potentialities, while the expanded requirements of industry, agriculture, construction and population increased the absorption capacity of the home market. In 1957 the volume of foreign trade was more than double that in 1952.

The profound changes which have taken place in Bulgaria's economy as a result of its industrialization have had considerable repercussions on its foreign trade structure. In 1939, 96 per cent of the country's total exports consisted of farm produce in a natural or processed state, while industrial products (including ores) accounted for a mere 4 per cent. By 1957 these figures had changed to 41 and 59 per cent respectively. Pretty much the same development occurred on the import side, where the once predominant consumer goods have given way to machinery, equipment and raw materials necessary for production.

Bulgaria's commercial relations have strongly expanded: today it is trading with 63 countries, with 36 of which it has regular trade agreements, as against 47 and 18 respectively in prewar days.

The socialist countries account for no less than 85 per cent of Bulgaria's total trade. First ranks the U. S. S. R. with 53.5 per cent, followed by Czechoslovakia with 11.3 per cent, the German Democratic Republic with 8.2 per cent, and Poland with 3.5 per cent.

Pursuing a consistent policy of peace and international collaboration on the basis of equality and mutual advantage, Bulgaria strives to expand its trade with all countries, regardless of their political system. Among the non-socialist countries with which Bulgaria is trading, first is the



German Federal Republic, followed by the United Arab Republic, Austria, Italy, France, Great Britain, Greece and Turkey. Trade with the countries of the Far East, Africa and Latin America is rapidly increasing.

An expression of Bulgaria's desire for economic collaboration with all countries is its regular participation in a number of international fairs abroad, including Leipzig, London, Poznan, Frankfurt-on-Main, Zagreb, Salonika, Novi Sad, Smyrna, Damascus and Cairo.

Bulgaria's chief exports are: fresh and canned fruit and vegetables, eggs, grapes, tobacco, dairy products, rose attar, ores and concentrates (especially lead, zinc and copper), minerals, cement, cottons, silks and woollens, knitwear, ready-made garments, machines and machine tools (particularly farm machinery such as ploughs, seed drills, threshers, grain combines), then electrical products such as radio sets, electric motors and transformers; ships, mineral fertilizers, soda ash and many other goods.

Bulgaria's imports consist primarily of machinery, equipment, spares, tractors, lorries, railway rolling stock, cars, building and loading machines, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, coke, petrol products, rubber, textile raw materials, chemicals, cellulose, motorcycles, bicycles and southern fruits.

*Soviet Aid and Economic Collaboration with the Socialist Countries.* Socialist construction in Bulgaria is organically connected with the mutual assistance and close collaboration with all socialist countries, in the first place with the Soviet Union.

The U. S. S. R., the most powerful country of the socialist camp, lends Bulgaria all-round aid in the building of socialism. To begin with, she supplies our country with all the necessary machinery, equipment and raw materials at most advantageous terms. Some 90 per cent of the tractors and all the grain combines come from the Soviet Union. The largest and most modern local plants of our ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, heavy chemical industry, machine-building, and particularly shipbuilding, are equipped with Soviet machines and tools. The U. S. S. R. sup-

plies Bulgaria with more than half the ferrous metals it needs, with almost 80 per cent of the cellulose, some 60 per cent of the cotton, 62 per cent of natural rubber, over two thirds of the petrol products, and so on.

At the same time, the Soviet Union provides a welcome market for Bulgaria's farm produce and industrial products. She absorbs 43 per cent of our exports of lead and zinc concentrates, 67 per cent of the cement, three quarters of our canned fruits and vegetables, 94 per cent of our furs and leather products, 55 per cent of our alcoholic beverages, 63 per cent of our tobacco. All these are exported at a most advantageous price.

In addition, the Soviet Union grants Bulgaria loans under the most favourable terms. Until the end of 1956 the total sum of Soviet long-term credits amounted to 7,800 million leva, i. e. about 27 per cent of all the capital investments made in our economy. In 1958 the U. S. S. R. advanced us a new credit to the tune of 335 million leva, a part of which will be used for the construction of major industrial development projects.

The largest industrial works built during the First and Second Five-Year Plans, of which Bulgaria is justly proud and which are the basis for the country's further industrialization, were built and equipped thanks to Soviet credits, with Soviet technique and with the direct assistance of Soviet specialists, engineers and technicians. These include the Chemical Works in Dimitrovgrad, the Lenin Metallurgical Works in Dimitrovo, the Lead & Zinc Plant in Kurdjali, the Superphosphate Fertilizer Plant, the Karl Marx Soda Plant in Devnya, the Copper Smelter & Refinery, the Dry Dock and Shipyards in Varna, and a number of other factories, dams, power stations, mines, and so forth.

Among the large new industrial enterprises to be built and equipped with Soviet aid in the course of the Third Five-Year Plan are the Metallurgical Works near Sofia, the new Nitrogen Fertilizer Plant in Dimitrovgrad, a second Lead & Zinc Plant, a Coke-Chemical Plant, an Oil Refinery, and others.

In the field of construction and transport Soviet aid is also a welcome boon. But of particular value for the rapid

progress of all the sectors of Bulgaria's economy is Soviet scientific and technical assistance. Within a mere decade our country has received no fewer than 750 varied sets of technical documentation completely free of charge, with the aid of which the production of a number of goods of exceptional importance to its economic development was launched. The highly systematic nation-wide prospecting for mineral and other resources has benefited largely from Soviet aid, as did the processing, refining and utilization of various underground riches. Soviet front-rankers in production and heroes of labour, initiators of progressive new methods in the various branches of the economy, frequently visit their Bulgarian colleagues to share their valuable experience and achievements with them. On the other hand, thousands of Bulgarian youths have received their training in Soviet schools and universities, thousands of Bulgarian specialists have improved their skill and qualification in the U. S. S. R., and are now applying their newly-acquired knowledge and skill to the progress of the Bulgarian economy. In a word, Soviet aid has become a vital necessity for this country's all-round development.

Second only to Soviet aid in economic importance ranks the economic collaboration between the socialist countries as a whole. Based on complete equality, mutual advantage and friendly mutual assistance, this collaboration is proving exceedingly fruitful for all parties concerned. Along with the Soviet Union, some of the more advanced industrial countries, such as Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, play an important role in the building and equipment of major Bulgarian industrial enterprises. In addition, Bulgaria's trade with the other socialist countries is continuously expanding.

Some of the country's largest power stations were built with Czech aid. During the Third Five-Year Plan Czechoslovakia will help Bulgaria build a battery factory, a number of power stations and other major industrial enterprises. The German Democratic Republic has so far been most useful in the construction of textile mills and food factories, and during the Third Five-Year Plan will participate in the construction of a cement factory, a factory for making

cellulose from straw, another for making briquettes and other factories.

Bulgaria, on its part, lends valuable aid to these two countries as well as to the other socialist countries in their economic development, both by supplying them with necessary agricultural and industrial goods and by lending them scientific and technical assistance and sharing with them its experience in certain economic sectors, especially in the socialist transformation of agriculture.

In recent years economic and scientific-technical collaboration between the socialist countries, parallel with their economic progress and planned edification of a socialist economy, is steadily deepening and assuming new and better forms. Increasing emphasis is being placed on co-ordination of the long-range plans, as well as specialization and co-operation in production between two or more socialist countries. This highest form of economic collaboration, hitherto unknown in history, is possible only between countries with a planned economy, which is based on the socialistic ownership of the means of production.

Mutual co-ordination of the long-range plans of the socialist countries, specialization and co-operation of their production are effected with the active assistance of an international body, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), and represents a factor of growing importance in the economic development of all socialist countries.

*The Budget.* The state budget, Bulgaria's basic financial plan, is a mirror of the state economic plan and is drafted in close connection with it. After being adopted by the National Assembly, it acquires the force of law.

The structure of the budget reflects the progressive character of the Bulgarian state. As a result of the continuous economic progress, the budget keeps on growing in size; every year larger allocations are set aside for the development of the economy and culture, for the well-being of the population.

Over 80 per cent of the budgetary revenue comes from the economy, while taxes today account for a mere 5.3 per cent. It is quite symptomatic that, in contrast to capitalist coun-

ries, the relative share of revenues from taxes is steadily decreasing: in 1949 it still stood at 12.6 per cent, while in prewar days it was Bulgaria's main revenue item. Tax revenues are now allotted for the construction of schools, hospitals, theatres, etc.

On the expenditure side, the economy again ranks first, with most of the budgetary funds being earmarked for the development of heavy and light industry, electrification, agriculture, as well as for education, culture, public health, and social insurance. The relative share of expenditure of a social welfare character (cultural needs etc.) is increasing from year to year: during the First Five-Year Plan 9,400 million leva went for such purposes, and during the Second Five-Year Plan more than double this amount - 19,100 million leva. In 1958 it accounted for more than a quarter of the budget (4,500 million leva), as against the 8.4 per cent devoted to defence allocations.

It should not be forgotten that in addition to the state budgets, the local district people's councils have their own budgets and spend considerable funds for social and cultural undertakings.

The scourge of Bulgaria's prewar budgets — the deficit — has disappeared from its socialist budget. Revenue annually exceeds expenditure, and this has a most beneficial effect on the country's monetary system. The national currency, the lev, is hitched to the Soviet ruble.

Thanks to the crisis-free steady upward development of Bulgaria's economy, the stability of the lev is increasing from year to year. In the course of the past six years, from 1952 to 1958, its purchasing power increased by about one third — quite a contrast to the constant monetary devaluations as a result of inflation and other economic difficulties, practiced in most capitalist states.

Bulgaria's policy of steadily bringing down consumer prices, and of continuously raising production and commodity stocks, leads to a constant increase in the purchasing power of the lev — a sure sign of the strength and stability of the nation's economy.

*The New Economic Programme (1959-62-65) — a Revolutionary Leap in Bulgaria's Development.* The Seventh Congress

of the Bulgarian Communist Party, held in June 1958, confirmed as fundamental economic and political task the further building up of a socialist society by an even greater development of the production base and by raising the socialist consciousness of the masses which, in turn, will create the necessary prerequisites for the ever more complete satisfaction of their material and cultural needs as well as the conditions for the nation's gradual transition from socialism to communism. In the spirit of the historic decisions of the Seventh Congress, the working people raised the slogan: «The Five-Year Plan in Three to Four Years!». Under this slogan a powerful movement developed which encompasses millions of working people in town and village.

The successful fulfilment of the first two five-year plans and the general movement for speeding up the third, launched during the first year of the Third Five-Year Plan, gave rise to a reassessment of the pace and scale of the nation's economic development. At its plenary session in January 1959, the Bulgarian Communist Party made this reassessment, mapping out the indicators for a new stupendous programme covering the period 1959-62-65.

The Plenum noted, first of all, that the great economic successes, the development of the country's productive forces, the emergence of leading cadres in the centre and locally have created new social and economic conditions, which require a further amelioration of the structure, forms and methods of the state administration and economic management. The work of the state apparatus and the management of the economy were reconstructed and improved on the basis of the principles of democratic centralism. These combine central leadership on basic questions with maximum local and mass initiative; economic and administrative decentralization — creation of 30 self-governing economic units (districts); less costly and more highly qualified administrative direction and economic management, so as to increase the efficiency of the whole economy. This reorganization is a new, higher stage, in the development of socialist democracy.

After a nation-wide discussion of the new economic programme, at its session in March, 1959, the Bulgarian National Assembly voted a special act on the Accelerated Development of the Nation's Economy, the Raising of the Material and Cultural Standards and the Reconstruction of the State Apparatus and Economic Management.

The new scales and rates of the extended reproduction during the period 1959-62-65 fully correspond to the new conditions created as a result of the final victory of the socialist productive relations in Bulgaria.

The basic line of Bulgaria's economic development during the period 1959-62-65 will be a rapid increase in agricultural output and in the production of the processing enterprises, while maintaining the priority development of the branches turning out capital goods. The great increase in production is expected to lead to a substantial rise in the general standard of living.

Close economic co-operation with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist world will be an important factor in attaining these ambitious goals. However, Bulgaria will continue to extend and consolidate its trade relations with all other countries as well, regardless of differences in the social and political system.

*Industry.* The total volume of industrial production is expected to more than double by 1962, while in 1965 it should be about 3-4 times as high as in 1957.

The targets for the different branches of industry are the following:

*Metallurgy and Machine-Building.* The output of pig iron is to attain about 230,000 tons in 1962 and some 700,000 tons in 1965; steel—400,000 and 900,000 tons respectively; and rolled ferrous metals — 320,000 and 700,000 tons respectively.

By 1964 the metallurgical works at Kremikovtsi, Sofia district, are to be commissioned; their first blast furnace is to have an annual capacity of 400,000 tons. By the end of 1965 the second blast furnace is to be commissioned, after which the metal supply problem of the local machine-build-

ing and metal-dressing industry will be solved by and large. In connection with the construction of the Kremikovtzi Works, the output of coke will be expanded with the aim of reaching an annual figure of 700,000 tons in 1964.

Non-ferrous metallurgy is to receive a powerful development as well. The main production targets for 1962 are: lead — 45,000 tons and electrolytic copper — 17,000 tons, while for 1965 they are: lead — 90,000 tons, zinc — over 50,000 tons, and electrolytic copper — 25,000 tons.

There can be no genuine industrial progress without the development of the machine-building industry, which provides the necessary technical equipment for the nation's economy. The volume of the machine-building and metal-processing industry in 1962 is to be 3-4 times as high as in 1957, while in 1965 it is to be almost 5 times as high as in 1957. Machine-building is to be developed primarily with a view to meeting the domestic demand for machinery, tools, instruments and spares; priority will be given to the sectors turning out machinery for the chemical, textile, food and mining industries and, in particular, for agriculture.

*Coal and Power.* Coal output is to double by 1962 and to increase 3-4 times in 1965 (as compared with 1957). The exploitation of the East Maritsa Lignite Coal Basin will be pushed in particular. An impetus will be given to the development of the coke-chemical industry by raising the output of black coal to 970,000 tons in 1962 and to 1.2 million tons in 1965.

Geologists are assigned the responsible task of detecting new deposits of black, lignite and anthracite coal, as well as of oil and gas, with a view to ensuring the nation's fuel problem.

The new economic development targets cannot be attained without a continuous growth of power output. New major hydro-electric power stations and thermal power stations are to be built, and the power output is to be brought up to about 6-7,000 million kw/h in 1962 and to 10,000 million kw/h in 1965.

*Chemical Industry.* There is to be an acceleration of the rate of development as well as a diversification



of production. The volume of production is to be trebled by 1962 and to be increased 7 times by 1965. An oil refinery with a capacity of 1 million tons will be built and commissioned. Great attention will be paid to the production of plastics for the needs of the machine-building, metal-processing, light and food industries; the target set for 1962 is 16,000 tons, and for 1965 — 30-40,000 tons.

Other branches of the chemical industry which are to be sped up include the production of synthetic fibres, cellulose and paper; the targets here are: 1962 — 78,000 tons of cellulose and 150,000 tons of paper and cardboard; 1965 — 200,000 tons of cellulose and about 260,000 tons of paper and cardboard. The production of mineral fertilizers, so necessary to farming, is to be increased to over 1,600,000 tons in 1965, thus ensuring some 120 kg of fertilizers per acre of arable land as against 18 kg in 1957.

*Building Materials.* The wide construction activity during the coming years as well as the major tasks facing the entire economy make it necessary to considerably speed up the output of building materials. For cement the targets are: 1962 — 2.3 million tons, 1965 — over 3 million tons. The production of building slabs from saw dust and other wood waste will attain about 200,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

Other building materials, the production of which is to be sped up, include plate glass, bricks and tiles.

*Light and Food Industry.* The continuously growing domestic demand for consumer goods as well as the now planned expansion of the raw material base require a substantial development of the food and light industry.

The output of light industry is to be more than doubled by 1962 and more than trebled by 1965. The production of cotton fabrics is to reach 280-300 million metres in 1962 and some 350 million metres in 1965; of woollens — 25 million metres in 1962 and over 30 million metres in 1965; of shoes — 10-12 million pairs in 1962 and 13-15 million pairs in 1965.

The rubber industry is to be considerably expanded; the existing plants will be enlarged and new ones built. The

output of automobile tyres is to be increased to 400,000 sets in 1962 and to about 500,000 in 1965.

The rapid expansion of the food industry is connected with the planned leap in agriculture. A large part of the farm produce is to be processed. Here are some of the more important 1962 targets in this branch of industry: sugar — 348,000 tons, as against 117,000 in 1957; tinned fruit — 227,000 tons as against 60,600 tons in 1957; tinned vegetables — 228,000 tons as against 94,400 tons; wine — 397.5 million litres as against 119.2 million litres; meat — 384,000 tons as against 113,000 tons.

The total production of the food industry in 1962 is to be 2½ times as high as in 1957, while in 1965 it should make a further substantial advance in accordance with the further development of farming.

Increasing domestic and foreign demand for Bulgarian wines will make it necessary to considerably expand and modernize the country's wine cellars. The canning industry is confronted with the task of expanding and diversifying the assortment of its production, for which there is a growing demand abroad in recent years. The tobacco industry too will have to increase and improve its production.

The leap in agriculture will entail a corresponding expansion of the industrial enterprises processing the products of animal husbandry. The output of bacon and sausages will be increased, and the necessary industrial base will be created for dairy products, the output of which is expected to skyrocket in the near future.

*Agriculture: A New Stage.* The spontaneous movement of peasants to join co-operative farms reached, towards the end of 1958 and the beginning of 1959, a new and higher stage of development. The typical features of this new stage are: 1. Co-operative farms have become large-scale socialist agricultural enterprises with greatly increased economic potentialities. With the merger of the previously existing 3,150 co-operative farms into some 1,000 larger units the prerequisites have been created for a substantial increase of public production as well as of the farms' basic and turnover funds and, most important of all, for much higher incomes, both

as regards the farm as a whole and its individual members. 2. There exist now far better conditions in the larger farm units for an improvement and expansion of the production and technical management, for introducing large-scale mechanization in stockbreeding and grain production. At the same time, these larger farms are in a position to undertake reclamation work on an extensive scale, thus considerably augmenting their arable acreage. 3. After the administrative reorganization in January 1959 a large number of trained and experienced economic and political cadres, specialists and mechanizers were released for work on the enlarged co-operative farms. 4. The amalgamation of the co-operative farms creates conditions for quantitative changes in the structure of the co-operative system, for its improvement and perfection. Present conditions are now such that the co-operative farms will eventually turn into socialist enterprises and co-operative property will become national property. This will later make it possible to apply in agriculture the same socialist principles of remuneration of labour which are now in force in the towns. The labour of co-operative farmers will increasingly tend to identify itself with that of industrial workers until finally it turns into a variety of industrial labour.

These trends will be strongly stimulated by the accelerated development of the whole economy and the sharp rise in labour productivity and farm production, as set down in the new economic programme. In this context the problems of stimulating personal incentive, tightening labour discipline and broadening the production base of the co-operative farms were discussed.

Three major problems have been given a new solution, to wit:

1. In the near future the enlarged co-operative farms, whose economic potentialities far transcend those of the former co-operative farms, will gradually begin to buy up the tractors, combines and other farm machinery which now belongs to the 209 existing machine-tractor stations. The latter, which have already pretty much exhausted their political, economic and organizational functions, will be eliminated as a peculiar middleman between the socialist

state and the co-operative farms. In some regions, however, where the co-operative farms are not yet properly consolidated, the machine-tractor stations will continue to function for a certain while. It is expected that by the end of 1962 the co-operative farms will be able to take over all the rolling stock and technical inventory of the machine-tractor stations.

2. The upsurge of agriculture places relations between the socialist state and the co-operative farms on a new foundation. The abolition of compulsory state deliveries and the establishment of a new system for the purchase of farm produce at fixed prices are now on the agenda. This reform should allow co-operative farms to specialize in the growing of those crops for which the local climatic and soil conditions are most favourable. This, in turn, should give an impetus to every single farm as well as to the nation's economy as a whole.

The planned new method for the purchase of farm produce should secure the country the necessary food and raw materials and create the indispensable conditions for a continuous increase of agricultural production and for the growing prosperity of the farmers and the population as a whole.

3. The new system of assessing and remunerating the labour of co-operative farmers, which represents a step towards the gradual introduction of a single mode of wage payment in town and village, is based on the volume of their net production. For this purpose the volume of net production, expected of them in the total planned production with the material expenditures allowable on the average, will be determined beforehand in the annual plan of the co-operative farm in general and of every brigade, group or team in particular. The new system provides for a decrease of remuneration in kind and for an increase of remuneration in cash. After ensuring the necessary fund, the enlarged co-operative farms will gradually pass over to a system of advance payments on the basis of the guaranteed minimum average monthly and annual remuneration in cash.

According to the new economic programme, in the near future, when co-operative farms will be consolidated economically and financially, they will adopt the mode of re-

muneration current in state enterprises. This will be effected on the basis of a sharp increase in industrial and agricultural production, as a result of which the incomes of all working people will go up substantially. The equalization of remuneration in town and village will constitute a revolutionary leap in the development of the new Bulgarian village.

The new stage in the development of the village provides for the absorption of the village craft co-operatives and part of the local industry, such as mills, lime kilns, fodder mills, etc., by the co-operative farms. Various auxiliary enterprises for the utilization of part of the local production will be created at these farms. These enterprises, connected chiefly with the processing of farm produce, will enable the co-operative farms to make most profitable use of part of its available manpower during idle seasons. In this way the co-operative farmers will be able to increase their own incomes as well as those of the farm as a whole.

The advance of all co-operative farms to the level of the best ones in the next few years is one of the most important tasks of Bulgarian agriculture. Farms which have little land and insufficiently utilized manpower are beginning to develop various highly profitable branches, which consume a great deal of work, such as the raising of industrial crops, vegetables and fruit, poultry, pigs, sheep, bees, silk worms, fish etc.

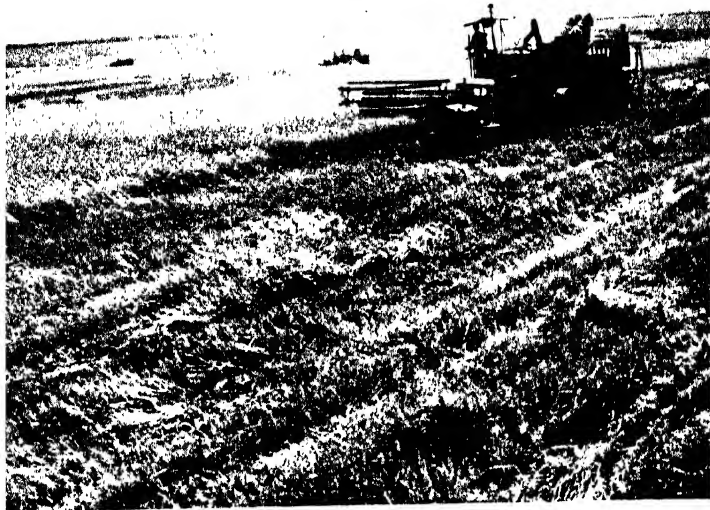
The full application of the latest scientific achievements and the experience of the foremost workers in agriculture are of special importance in the drive to carry out the impressive tasks set to agriculture. To this end the mass instruction of the leading co-operative cadres and of the co-operative farmers will continue with full force, so that they may master the technology of agricultural production still better.

*Agricultural Targets.* The higher stage of development marked by Bulgarian agriculture opens up great possibilities for a considerable increase in agricultural produce.

According to the targets of the new programme Bulgaria's national income from agriculture is to be three times



*The Valley of Roses in May*



*Reaping with a harvester combine in the Dobroudja*



*Spring in a co-operative field*





*Fruitful autumn*

higher in 1962, as compared with 1957, and about five times higher in 1965 respectively.

Once these goals attained, Bulgarian agriculture will be in a position to supply industry with the necessary raw materials and to produce an abundance of products for domestic consumption and for export.

These targets, however, cannot be attained without a corresponding increase in the arable land and especially of the irrigated acreage. The target set for arable land in 1962 is 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  million acres. Particular stress will be laid on the rapid construction of irrigation facilities: large and small dams, pump stations for draining the waters of the Danube and other rivers for irrigation purposes with a view to bringing up the irrigated acreage to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  million acres in 1962 and to 5 million acres in 1965.

The targets set for an increase in the number of farm animals are as follows:

	1962	1965
Cows, '000 heads	800	1,000
Sheep, '000 heads	12,000	13-15,000
Pigs, '000 heads	5,000	6,000
Poultry, '000 heads	45-50,000	79-80,000

*Transport.* The high targets set to industry and agriculture place transport before added responsibilities. Railway transport is expected to double the freight carried by 1962, automobile transport to increase by 95 per cent, and water transport — 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  times, as compared to 1957.

To improve the railway system, some 250 miles are to be electrified by 1962, and more yet by 1965. The railways' rolling stock will be replenished and expanded, diesel locomotives will be introduced, stations will be enlarged, the trunk lines will be doubled, the safety system drastically overhauled and modernized, and the capacity of all lines will be increased.

No less attention will be paid to automobile, air, fluvial and sea transport. The two shipyards in Varna and Roussé, which already produce vessels for domestic needs as well as for export, will acquire added importance during the next few years.

*National Income.* The rapid pace of economic development, set down in the new economic programme, should bring about a substantial rise in the national income and hence of the general standard of living. The national income is expected to attain 80-85,000 million leva in 1962 and 100-110,000 million leva in 1965, i. e. about 70-75,000 million leva more than in 1957. If and when this goal is reached, it will spell out a vast improvement in the material and cultural standards of the population.

The national income, as well as the progress of industry and agriculture, depend directly on labour productivity. The latter is therefore scheduled to increase 2.4 times over the 1957 level in 1962 and to more than treble by 1965. In agriculture, in particular, a steep rise in labour productivity is expected.

A rising national income and greater prosperity mean more consumption. Consumption is therefore expected to double by 1962 and to more than treble by 1965 (taking 1957 as basis).

The successful fulfilment of the new economic programme will create the material prerequisites for Bulgaria's gradual passage from socialism to communism.

*The Role of Science in the Economic Leap.* The building up of the material and production foundation of socialist society, the accelerated development of industry and agriculture, and the ever more complete satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the population presuppose an all-round development of science and its harnessing to the general national upsurge.

Socialism and science are closely bound up with one another. Under the conditions of socialism Bulgarian science was enabled to thrive. A nation-wide network of research institutes has been created with an adequate number of trained cadres. Bulgarian scientists and, in particular, geologists and agronomists have made a valuable contribution to the development of the productive forces and culture of the new society. In certain fields of science, such as the social sciences, physics, mathematics and agronomy, Bul-

garians have achieved fame far beyond the confines of the country.

The tasks set by the new economic programme before Bulgarian science are directly connected with the development of a raw material base for heavy and light industry, as well as with the speeding up of mechanization, automation and chemicalization of production, with a rapid rise of crop yields, and with securing an abundance of goods for the population.

To meet the increased requirements, Bulgarian science and its leading institutes are confronted with the task of undertaking a reorganization in the structure, style and method of work of the Bulgarian Academy of Science and its sectors and institutes. These are ensured by the state all the necessary facilities: apparatus, premises, laboratories. Parallel with its reorganization, the Bulgarian Academy of Science and the research institutes are taking all necessary measures for the training of an ever larger number of specialists in all fields of science and particularly in physics, chemistry, geology, economics, the technical and agronomical sciences.

Of particular importance in this connection are the measures taken for the continuous extension and consolidation of scientific relations with foreign research institutes, especially in the People's Democracies and in the Soviet Union. The collaboration of Bulgarian scientists with their foreign colleagues should give good results, stimulating domestic research.

Bulgaria has now the opportunity to make a major stride, a leap forward in its development. The new economic programme is a product of the pulse of life. Its implementation will be of historic significance to the general advance of the country in all walks of life.

*Savings and Insurance.* The annual increase of the national income, the continuous rise in wages and in the income of co-operative farmers, free education, free medical aid, paid vacations, the steady extension of the social welfare and insurance system — all this creates a sound and lasting foundation for a constant increase in savings.

Rising savings are not only the expression of growing prosperity and greater faith in the future, but also a fiscal source for the state's omnilateral construction activity. Beginning with the Constitution, Article 10 of which proclaims that «the savings of the population enjoy special protection», numerous measures have been taken which are aimed at the promotion and protection of savings. There is now a State Savings Bank, with central headquarters in Sofia and 2,875 branch offices.

The growing prosperity and confidence of the masses are revealed by the following figures: total deposits have risen from 951 million leva in 1944 to over 4,000 million leva in 1958; in 1958 alone the new deposits exceeded 800 million leva. The number of savings accounts has increased from 1,460,000 in 1944 to over 5 million at present.

These deposits belong to the working people: industrial and office workers, co-operative farmers, artisans and intellectuals. Deposits up to 12,000 leva cannot be blocked for private and public obligations unless it has been legally established that they have been acquired in a criminal manner.

Savings deposits, including interest, are tax-free. The confidential nature of savings deposits is strictly observed. Deposits in the State Savings Bank may be for a limited or unlimited time, workers' or children's savings. The most common form of savings accounts is for an unlimited time, and may be withdrawn at any time, in part or entirely. An interest of 3 per cent is paid.

Workers' deposits, coming from voluntary monthly payments deducted from wages or farmers' remunerations, enjoy particular privileges. The payments are collected by the respective cashiers and deposited in the State Savings Bank once a month, while for co-operative farmers they are automatically deducted by the cashier of the farm when making advance payments or final payments of the work days. The interest paid on these deposits is 4 per cent.

Another method of saving was by participation in the internal state loans. During the First and Second Five-Year Plans these played an important role in the successful building up of socialism. So far the population has received about

1,000 million leva in the form of interest and premiums from these loans. In this way the working people help the state as well as themselves. In recent years, however, the state loans have been discontinued to enable the population to make use of the other forms of savings.

Among these, housing savings have become particularly popular of late. The policy of promoting private and co-operative housing construction has contributed a good deal to the spread of this form of savings. The state grants loans of up to 40,000 leva to prospective house or flat owners through the Bulgarian Investment Bank. To be entitled to such a loan, a citizen must deposit 30 per cent of the requested loan, or at least 12,000 leva, in the bank. Six months after depositing this sum, he is entitled to a loan, which has to be repaid within 25 years.

Housing construction deposits and the number of such depositors are continuously increasing: the deposits from 16 million leva in 1953 to about 500 million leva in 1958, and the depositors from 5,412 in 1953 to over 55,000 in 1958.

This form of savings plays an important part in speeding up housing construction, and is therefore fostered by the state. In 1957 the state set aside 201 million leva for crediting this construction, while the funds provided for this purpose in the Third Five-Year Plan amount to 1,670 million leva. These funds, together with the depositors' own means, will make it possible to build another 60,000 apartments.

Insurance too is a major factor in the development of savings. Personal and property insurance is a state monopoly and is handled by the State Insurance Institute. The most popular personal insurance is life insurance valid for five, ten or twenty years or up to an agreed age of the insured person. Such insurance helps to provide for old age, or to build a new home, etc. The number of life insurances had increased from 425,260 in 1944 to 1,100,000 for a sum of 1,700 million leva by June 30, 1958.

Insurance payments are concentrated in an insurance fund which guarantees the prompt and full payment of the sums specified in all insurance policies. At the same time, the

State Insurance Institute is able to set aside money from its own funds, placing it at the disposal of the state for the expansion of production, acceleration of socialist construction, etc.

There exist also other forms of insurance, such as accident insurance and property insurance of citizens or public organizations and associations.



## CARE FOR MAN — THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF BULGARIA'S DEVELOPMENT

The care for man, the nation's foremost capital, the ever fuller satisfaction of his growing material and cultural needs, that is the guiding principle of Bulgaria's entire economic, social and cultural development.

The policy of steadily raising the general standard of living manifests itself in the rapid increase and in the dis-



tribution of the national income, which is effected in the interests of the working people only.

*National Income.* The basic yardstick for the rapid development of Bulgaria's productive forces and of the general economic progress is the steady rise in the national income. In 1957, i. e. at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, it was 2.3 times higher than in 1939 and 1.5 times higher than in 1952.

In Bulgaria, as in all other socialist countries, the national income is used entirely for the satisfaction of all the needs of the socialist society (personal and social consumption) and for the expansion of socialist reproduction.

How is the national income used in Bulgaria?

In 1952 almost three quarters (73.2 per cent) went for consumption, while slightly over one quarter (26.8 per cent) was directed towards the expansion of production. By 1957 the respective figures had shifted to 81.5 and 18.5 per cent. In other words, the lion's share of the national income is spent on the direct and indirect satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the population, while less than a quarter goes back to the economy for its further expansion, for the development of science, public health, social welfare and cultural undertakings which, in the final analysis, again benefit the masses.

This characteristic of the national income and of its distribution strikingly demonstrates the profoundly democratic character of Bulgaria's contemporary development. At the same time, it demonstrates that the policy pursued by the people's government is a policy of national prosperity and industrial progress. Such a policy could hardly be implemented were it not for the fact that Bulgaria is a member of the comity of socialist countries and as such can always count on their unstinting aid.

*Wages.* The national income is divided between the different groups and layers of the population in accordance with the socialist principle of distribution — to each according to the socially useful work done.

The system of wages in Bulgaria is based on the quantitative and qualitative criterion of output: he who produces more and better, gets a higher wage. This system introduces equity and justice in the gradation of wages and in the distribution of the national income and, at the same time, offers a strong incentive for a steady increase in the quantity and a continuous improvement in the quality of the output, as well as for raising the workers' professional qualification.

The same principle of remuneration has been adopted in the co-operative farms. From the farm's net income every co-operator gets the share corresponding to the work done by him or her.

As a result of this flexible system, the constant increase in production is accompanied by a continuous rise in wages. Thus, for instance, during the ten-year period 1948-57 labour productivity in industry increased by 88 per cent, while the annual wage increased by 91 per cent. In 1957 the average wage in the national sector of industry attained 8,734 leva, in the fuel industry -- 10,416 leva, and in ore mining -- 11,235 leva.

During the Second Five-Year Plan alone, wages increased by about 27 per cent on the average.

As a result of higher crop yields and of the increase in the purchasing price of a number of farm staples, as well as of the other facilities granted by the state to the farmers, the monetary revenues of the peasants increased by about 40 per cent in the course of the Second Five-Year Plan.

*Prices.* Wage increases alone do not suffice, however, to reveal the overall rise in the standard of living, which is closely connected with the price level and its predominating trends.

While wages have increased, the prices of consumer goods have tended to go down. Between 1952 and 1956 six consecutive price reductions were effected, which indirectly increased the monetary revenues of the population by roughly 7,000 million leva. The prices of consumer goods dropped during this period by about 28 per cent, indirectly raising the monetary revenues of the population by about the same percentage. Thus, during the Second Five-Year Plan, real

incomes rose on the whole by 55 per cent, a record of which the nation can well be proud.

At the end of 1958 a new price reduction was carried out, affecting primarily industrial goods. The price of watches was reduced by about 50 per cent, of electrical household utensils and radios - by about 30 per cent, of cars and motorcycles - by about 20 per cent; there were also considerable price reductions for nylon, silk and cotton goods, for certain kitchen utensils, for porcelain, and so on.

*Consumption.* The rise in production and the increase of the monetary incomes of the population, together with the reduction in prices, have considerably stimulated home trade. In 1957 the turnover of goods was twice as high as in 1952. At the same time, the purchasing power of the lev increased by about 40 per cent.

In 1953 the average worker's family spent 52.6 per cent of its annual income on food and 47.4 per cent on other things. In 1957 the share of food had dropped to 44.5 per cent, revealing a decisive improvement in living standards.

The food bought by the population is not only getting cheaper but also improving in quality. Today the average Bulgarian's diet is much better than it used to be in 1939, as can be seen from the following table, which shows the increase in the consumption of some staple foods of a worker's family:

<i>Product</i>		<i>1939</i>	<i>1957</i>	<i>Increase in %</i>
Rice	kg	3.9	5.7	46.2
Potatoes	"	14.8	24.7	66.9
Vegetables	"	85.4	95.1	11.4
Fruit	"	26.0	35.6	36.9
Milk	"	33.8	56.6	67.5
Cheese	"	6.4	9.0	40.6
Meat and meat products	"	23.3	33.5	43.8
Animal fats	"	1.2	3.6	200
Sugar	"	5.8	9.1	62.5
Eggs	number	52	86	65.4

The interest of the working people in cultural goods and acquisitions is also rapidly increasing, as shown by the increased sale of such goods. Thus, in 1957 there were 491,618 radios in Bulgaria, as against a mere 62,677 in 1939. The number of radios and radio-broadcasting stations has increased sharply, especially after a domestic radio industry was created. Electrical household utensils, such as electric ranges, washing machines and vacuum cleaners, are rapidly becoming an integral part of the people's way of life.

Increased food consumption, heightened interest in cultural goods, furniture, rugs, electrical household utensils, radios, and so on, have resulted in a steep rise in home trade, which in 1957 attained a level twice as high as in 1952 and about three times as high as in 1948.

*Social Welfare.* An eloquent proof of the growing prosperity of socialist Bulgaria is not only the systematic rise in real wages and consumption, but also the increased emphasis placed by the state on social welfare in the broadest sense of the term. Year in and year out budgetary allocations are increased for such important items as child care, public health, canteens, pensions, and paid vacations.

*1. Canteens.* An important social service of the people's government is the provision of canteens for industrial and office workers, where wholesome food is served at wholesale prices. The canteen diet is steadily improving in quality and becoming more varied. Not only the workers but also their families can take their meals there. This privilege is almost equal to an additional monthly wage, for every one eating at the canteen saves more than 500 leva per year.

*2. Pensions.* Pensions are subordinated to the basic principle of socialist society -- every citizen is paid according to what he has contributed. The vast majority of Bulgarians are today entitled to a state pension. Recently the pensions of the lower-paid categories were substantially increased. For the first time in the nation's history peasants, organized in co-operative farms, receive a pension: men above the age of 60 and women above the age of 55. This measure has

affected about half a million peasant households. The pension rate of industrial and office workers ranges between 55 and 80 per cent of the gross monthly wage or salary and is based on the three best-paid consecutive years during the last decade of work. Thus, those receiving a wage below 600 leva, get a pension equal to 80 per cent of their wage; in the next category -- 600-800 leva -- the percentage drops to 75, and the higher the wage or salary, the lower the percentage, until it reaches the minimum 55 per cent.

*3. Paid Vacations.* Annual holidays with pay are enjoyed by all Bulgarian workers. The length of this vacation depends upon two factors: 1) branch of production; 2) years of service. Persons engaged in heavy physical work and highly skilled scientists, as well as adult workers with many years of service, enjoy the longest paid vacations. The paid holiday period ranges between 16 and 40 working days.

Mothers are granted a total of four months paid leave of absence, so that every Bulgarian mother is entitled to almost five months (incl. the annual vacation) paid leave of absence.

*4. Child Care.* There are no longer any privileged classes in Bulgaria, but there certainly exists a privileged group -- the children, and our people's democratic state is proud and happy to be able to shower them with privileges, for they represent the nation's bright and sunny future. Child care finds its principal expression in the rapidly growing number of nurseries and kindergartens. In 1957 more than one half of the pre-school age children attended the 6,220 existing kindergartens. These are housed in special buildings, which are modern, spacious and hygienic, conforming to all necessary requirements. There the children not only play and rest and take their meals but also receive pre-school education under the supervision of trained specialists. A small fee is charged, depending on the income of the parents.

In 1956 family allowances for children were increased by over 300 million leva per year. This measure has substantially improved the budget of large families.

5. *Rest Homes.* A large number of modern rest homes and villas have been built during the past 15 years in the country's finest sea and mountain resorts, as well as in the foremost spas, to enable the masses to spend a worthwhile vacation under the most advantageous conditions. The progress in this respect has been truly phenomenal: whereas in 1944 the few existing rest homes could cater for a mere 6,000 workers, in 1948 the corresponding figure was 91,000, in 1957 it had almost trebled to attain 231,000, to jump in 1958 to almost 400,000. The workers vacationing in the trade union rest homes pay only one third of the expenses, while the shockworkers in production receive free bonuses for these resorts.

The construction of new trade union rest homes in the most beautiful parts of the country is proceeding apace. The rest homes in Velingrad and Nessebur are veritable palaces.

6. *Public Health.* Free medical aid is one of the most striking gains made by the Bulgarian people. Today every citizen is entitled to free medical examinations and treatment in any hospital or health institution; in other words, he pays neither for the medical care and drugs, nor for the food and lodging.

To ensure the application in practice of the Law on Free Medical Aid, a wide framework of hospitals, polyclinics, maternity homes, dispensaries, balneosanatoria and general sanatoria, and various other general and specialized medical institutions has been set up. At the same time, care is being taken to train the necessary medical personnel — specialists, doctors and nursing staff. In 1957 Bulgaria ranked among the first countries in Europe in the per capita number of doctors — one doctor for every 774 people.

Since 1944 the number of hospitals has increased from 159 to 436, and that of health homes — most of which are in the countryside—from 156 to 3,138. In the past there existed only one maternity home, and maternity aid was the privilege of a few urban women, while today there are 710 maternity homes, most of which are in the villages.

Side by side with the medical care, efficient preventive measures are being taken to combat contagious diseases and epidemics. As a result of the wholesale immunization of children and adults and of other prophylactic measures, by 1957 such banes as malaria, typhoid fever and cholera had practically disappeared.

Improved living conditions and better medical care have had the most favourable effect on the health of the people. The curve of life expectancy has gone up sharply, a fact indirectly borne out by the growing natural increase in population. Thanks mainly to the hundreds of new maternity homes in the villages, the infant and mother mortality rate has dropped appreciably. The infant mortality rate (to the age of 1) has fallen from 139 per thousand in 1939 to 79 per thousand in 1956, while for the general mortality rate the corresponding figures are 13.4 and 8.6.

The newly-created medical industry is an important factor in raising public health standards. Today Bulgaria produces a large number of efficient drugs which satisfy the nation's home requirements, while certain drugs, such as penicillin, santonin and biomyacin, to mention but a few, which until recently had to be imported, are now exported.

*7. Housing Construction.* One of the features which most impresses foreigners visiting Bulgaria nowadays, is the extensive housing construction, both in town and village. Considerable funds are earmarked for the purpose in the state budget. During the period September 9, 1944 — January 1, 1958, almost half a million new houses (492,518) were built for Bulgaria's 7 1/2-million population, 378,952 of which in the countryside. These were built either with private, state or co-operative funds. During the Second Five-Year Plan alone, almost 1,500 million leva were invested by the state in urban housing, involving the construction of two million square metres of living space, to which should be added almost another million square metres which were provided by private and co-operative initiative and with state subsidies.

Today one-third of Bulgaria's population lives in new houses, built in the postwar years. Almost all the villages

have undergone much more than a face-lifting; they have literally changed their faces: entire new settlements and districts have sprung up with attractive large apartment houses, furnished with modern conveniences. In Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Sliven, Vratsa, Bourgas, Roussé and other towns thousands of beautiful new apartment houses and scores of cosy, attractive suburban settlements have emerged. In Sofia alone, during the past fifteen years, the following new major housing projects have been built: Lagera, Krasna Polyana, Zaharna Fabrika, Vladimir Zaimov, Lenin, Buxton (yes, so named after a good British friend of Bulgaria), Ivan Vazov, Lozenets, and so on. The rent charged here as in general is very low indeed, ranging from 5 to 10 per cent of the family's monthly income.

The rapid increase in housing construction is also largely due to the substantial rise in private incomes during the past few years, for the working people are now in a position to save and settle their own housing problem. Thus, for instance, private savings in the Bulgarian Investment Bank have skyrocketed from a mere 16 million leva in 1953 to 363 million leva in 1957.

8. *Town Planning.* Considerable funds are set aside by the state every year for town planning and the electrification of Bulgarian inhabited localities. Since 1944 thousands of streets have been paved, sewerage has been brought to many localities, as well as electricity and water mains. Sofia's tramway network was extended, while trolleybus and bus lines were introduced in a number of towns.

The construction of hotels, restaurants and public baths has been stepped up appreciably. In Varna Beach and Golden Sands alone some 28 modern hotels were built during the last couple of years or so.

The local people's councils in towns and villages pay particular attention to the extension of parks, gardens and green areas. Trees are planted in practically every street and square.

During the years of the Third Five-Year Plan, in addition to the improvement of the whole population's standard of living, sanitary conditions will be ameliorated and cultur-



al amenities will be extended, while the life of the people will be made easier through further town-planning and the development of communal services. Water supply, sewerage, municipal transport and the construction of hotels, public baths, parks, etc. will be further expanded. The Plan provides for the construction of 75 public baths and 28 hotels, for the introduction of a municipal bus service in 18 more towns, for supplying 473 localities with water and another 11 towns with a new sewerage system.

In the implementation of the general measures of town-planning and urbanization the population will take a most active part through voluntary labour service. At the same time, with the consolidation of the co-operative farms, the growing prosperity of their members and their rising indivisible funds, the rural population will be able to carry out on its own a number of social and cultural undertakings for the transformation of the villages into flourishing socialist localities.

*The Economic Leap and the Further Improvement of the People's Material and Cultural Situation.* The balance of what has been achieved in the last years is a fine one. The systematic increase in the real income of the population, the appreciable increase in consumption, the housing construction which has gone steadily ahead, the mass savings of the population, the flowering of culture and the arts — all this indicates a marked trend towards a steady rise in the Bulgarian people's living standards.

But the population's real income, as has already become apparent, also increases from the wide-spread system of a great variety of social, health, cultural and other measures, such as the right to free medical services and treatment, free education, insurance, pensions and scholarships, the payment of the running expenses of canteens for workers and employees, increases in family allowances, the privileges of pregnant women and mothers, the right to paid leave and rest at the trade union holiday centres, and so on.

The economic leap, which the country is to make in the period of 1959-62-65, strongly stresses the improvement in the people's life. The leap in Bulgaria's economic

development is not an aim in itself, of course, but is precisely the chief means of achieving a level of production forces, and an increase in the production of material benefits which will create a stable basis for a vigorous rise in the cultural and material level of life. An increase in the people's prosperity is the supreme law in the development of the economy and the supreme aim of nation-wide labour.

Parallel with realizing the tasks of the new economic programme for the development of production forces, a wide system of the most varied measures is to be gradually put through in the next few years, directed towards the all-round improvement of the people's life, raising their standards and culture.

In the first place, attention is to be directed to reconstruction in certain points in the system of payment of labour, with a view to perfecting it and establishing the maximum fairness in the ratio between the wages and salaries of the different categories of working people. Provision is made to raise the low salaries, with a view to the minimum rising from 400 leva as it is now to 600 leva. A respectively graduated increase is provided for the remaining salaries as well. In the first place the salaries of the teachers, doctors and research workers in the low salary group are to be raised.

Increases in salaries and pensions are to be put through parallel with the systematic reduction of the prices of consumer goods, which considerably contributes to raising the living standards of the people.

The people's material and cultural situation is also to improve by means of an increase in the employment of manpower. In the next few years conditions will be created enabling every able-bodied member of a family to go to work and earn an income. This will be secured by the gradual accomplishment of the tasks set by the new economic leap, as a result of which the country's production capacities will constantly expand and there will be an ever growing demand for manpower.

This problem is linked with the necessity of liberating women from their household chores. Freeing woman from her present slavery to home and kitchen will not only

enable her to take part in productive labour, but will increase her self-respect, improve the family income and assist her socialist education.

The liberation of woman from housework will be accomplished by putting through a whole series of measures, linked with family life: establishment of public kitchens and canteens, where everyone will be able to obtain inexpensive, wholesome and nourishing food; sale of semi-cooked food; electrification of kitchens; extension of the network of children's nurseries, kindergartens and study homes both in the towns and on the co-operative farms; opening of new public laundries and baths; reduction of prices chiefly of children's clothing and shoes and so on.

The accomplishment of an economic leap in the next few years provides for the introduction of a seven-hour day, and a six-hour day for particularly hard and harmful production, without a reduction in wages and salaries. The reduction of the working day will be one of the most important social measures in the next few years, and a major gain for the working people. After the seven-hour day has been everywhere introduced, there is to be a gradual transition to a six-hour day, conditions for an even shorter working day being created in later years.

The reduction of the working day is to take place on the basis of a new organization of production in all enterprises, with a view to sharply increasing the productivity of labour, so that the reduction in the working day will not reduce the profitability of the enterprise, and the workers' wages will remain at the present level and even increase. This new organization of production processes has already been successfully tried out, and given excellent results in certain factories since the end of 1958. This experience is to be gradually introduced in the entire industry, being creatively applied to concrete local conditions.

Among the tasks set to increase the people's prosperity in the next few years, housing construction and the planning of towns and villages take a special place. In the forthcoming seven-year period up to 1965 the housing problem in the towns is to be fully solved, and simultaneously the villages will be fully supplied with water, electricity and

transport. Housing construction is to be speeded up with regard to the system hitherto in use, so that not a single family in the country be left without a healthy and sunny home.

The constant rise in the cultural level of the working people, with a view to overcoming the irregularity in the cultural development of town and countryside, is a significant task of the new period. The countryside is to make greater efforts to catch up with the culture of the towns. Provision has been made for every Bulgarian village and hamlet to have at least seven public buildings — a school, a well-organized public kitchen, a public laundry and bath, a children's nursery and kindergarten, a home of culture, a public health building, and a sports compound.

In the struggle to raise nation wide culture, particular attention has been paid to the organization of education, and linking it with material production. In the next few years provision is to be made to secure general secondary education for all citizens.

The realization of all these measures for raising the material and cultural level of the people, which is to be done in the next five or six years, will have as its final result: maximum fairness in the distribution of the national income, securing work and a comparatively high income for every citizen; a sufficient pension and security in old age; rest, free health services, and all possibilities for a cultural advance; conditions enabling the growing generations to acquire at least a secondary education, a definite profession and qualification, as well as general culture.

The solution of the problems indicated above will lead in time to a reduction in the essential differences in the material and cultural development of town and countryside, between intellectual and physical labour; it will create the necessary conditions for consolidating the family, raising material and cultural life, for the full-blooded harmonious spiritual and physical education of the growing generations.

The revolutionary leap in the country's economic development, mapped out by the new programme for the period

1959-62-65, is, essentially, also a leap in improving the material and cultural condition of the people. The next few years, the years of inspired labour for the fulfilment of the new imposing economic programme, will be years of a heroic nation-wide drive for a peaceful and happy life and general prosperity.



## SCIENCE, ARTS AND CULTURE

*The Spirit of Bulgarian Culture.* Bulgarian culture goes back to that distant period in which Asparouh laid the foundations of the Bulgarian state in the 7th century. An original Bulgarian culture was born of the former culture of the Slav tribes, which then inhabited the Balkan Peninsula, and of the Proto-Bulgarians, as well as of the antique (Greek, Roman and Thracian) and Byzantine cultures. There was a particularly great flowering of Bulgarian culture in the 9th and 10th centuries, when our country became the nursery

of Slav literature. Cyril and Methodius, and after them a galaxy of Old Bulgarian scholars, created a rich Old Bulgarian literature, which was of great importance for all the Slavs. Our apocryphal literature, which was widespread among the people, was born at the same time as the official literature. The apocrypha, together with the Bogomil movement, spread all over Europe, and more particularly in Russia, Italy, France and Byzantium. In later periods, many writers, such, as Dante, Anatole France, Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, made use of them in their own work.

Bulgaria's cultural development was interrupted for nearly two centuries in the 11th century, when the country fell under Byzantine domination. Many monuments of our medieval literature were destroyed. But once the Byzantine bondage was cast off, Bulgarian culture surged forward once more. In the 13th and 14th centuries literature, architecture and art flowered once again. Numerous books appeared, churches and palaces were decorated with frescos, woodcarving flourished, and so did the construction of private and public buildings. Teodosi Turnovski founded the school of Kelifarevo, and one of the most remarkable representatives of our medieval literature, Patriarch Evtimi founded the celebrated school of Turnovo, the influence of which spread all over the Balkan Peninsula. His pupils did much to raise the culture of Russia, Serbia, and Wallachia to a higher level. Grigori Tsamblak, an eminent Bulgarian scholar and writer, the author of twenty-five works, belongs to the Bulgarian, Russian, Serbian and Moldavian literatures.

Art, crafts and architecture all flourished in these centuries, achieving a high level of excellence. Celebrated iconographers, woodcarvers and builders appeared at this time, as is witnessed by Babinité Vidini Kouli, the fortress built in Vidin in the 13th century, the fortress walls of Tsarevets and the churches in Turnovo, the town of Nessebur on the Black Sea, a veritable museum in itself, and many other interesting ruins, which have come down to us from that day. The church frescos show what medieval painting was like in Bulgaria at that time, with its distinctive realism and freedom from iconographic rules and conventions. The fres-

cos of the Boyana Church (built in the 13th century) are a marvellous monument of the art of this period; they are far superior to any similar work in Europe. A school of master iconographers existed in Bulgaria at that time, and their fame was widespread all over the Balkan countries.

Artists decorated not only churches and palaces, but the books of that day with wonderful vignettes, capital letters and miniatures done in beautiful colours. The books illuminated for Ivan Alexander in the 14th century — the Chronicle of Manasses, which is in the Vatican Library, and the Bible known in England as the «Curzon Bible» which is in the British museum — are known all over Europe.

Much gold and silver jewelry (bracelets, rings, ear-rings and necklaces) and dishes, glazed pottery, embroideries, woodcarving on iconostases, doors and household articles, have come down to us from that period.

At the end of the 14th century, the Bulgarian people fell under Ottoman bondage. Many Bulgarian writers and scholars, artists and master carvers left the country at that time and scattered far and wide, mainly in Russia and Moldavia. The monasteries now became centres of culture. Intelligent monks, who were good scholars and scribes, copied the old books and distributed them far and wide. All that was of value, books, the works of our medieval literature, works of art, beautiful carvings, examples of the goldsmiths' art, was carefully preserved here. Among the most famous monasteries in which Bulgarian culture was preserved were the Rila Monastery, where scholars such as Vladislav Grammatik and Yosif Bradati worked; the monasteries of Etropole, Kratovo and Bachkovo. In the 16th century, the school of Sofia was founded by Father Peyu and Matei Grammatik.

The first printed books in the Bulgarian language began to appear at this time. They included Philip Stanislavov's «Abagar», Hristo Zhefarovich's «Stematographia» and others, and finally we come to Sofroni Vrachanski's «Nedelnik».

Education developed in the period of the National Revival. The first Bulgarian school was founded in Gabrovo in 1835, and became the nursery of the New Bulgarian education.



In the 19th century — the period of the Revival — some remarkable Bulgarian writers appeared, who were at the same time great figures in the Revival; among them were Georgi Sava Rakovski, Dobri Chintoulov, Vassil Droumev, Iliya Bluskov, Dobri Voinikov, Pencho Rachev Slaveikov, Lyuben Karavelov and Hristo Botev. In 1842, Konstantin Fotinov began to publish the first Bulgarian periodical, entitled «Lyuboslovié», while Ivan Bogorov began the publication of the first Bulgarian newspaper, «Bulgarski Orel», in Leipzig, in 1846. Scores of Russian, English, French, German and Italian books and works of literature were translated, some being adapted to the needs of the Bulgarian reader of that day. With the rapid development of schools and the library club movement, and of the periodical press, with the appearance of translated and original plays, the Bulgarian theatre was also founded. Today, many valuable Bulgarian manuscripts of exceptional historical interest and value are scattered in the libraries of Moscow, London, Paris, Rome and Prague.

Scores of museums all over the country preserve the countless treasures of our national culture.

Bulgarian national culture also found striking expression in folk art. It lives in the wonderful melodies of our folk songs, played by skilled rebeck players, in the lively national chain and round dances and ruchenitsas, and in all that the skilled and gifted hand of the Bulgarian has touched, when creating the wealth of material and spiritual values which is our heritage.

Today the Bulgarian people have the greatest possible opportunities of fully developing their creative powers and manifesting their gifts, so as to make their contribution to mankind's treasure house of culture.

*Education (Elementary and Secondary).* Bulgarians have an inquisitive mind and are thirsty for knowledge. Even when living in the darkness of the Turkish domination, they fought for and won the right to a national school. After Bulgaria's liberation in 1878, education made considerable progress and was democratic in character. In spite of all efforts on the part of the monarcho-fascist regime, the demo-

cratic spirit and traditions of education could not be completely stifled.

However, it is only after the establishment of a People's Democracy in 1944 that education really came into its own and flourished. The entire educational system was radically overhauled. The aims and content of education were completely changed and placed on a sound scientific basis. Religion and other unnecessary subjects were eliminated from the school programmes, all falsifications and chauvinistic excesses were removed from the textbooks, the teaching of the language, of mathematics and natural sciences was improved. Relying on the democratic traditions of the past and creatively applying Soviet experience in this field, the Bulgarian school is increasingly performing its proper function of giving the young generation a sound and constructive preparation for life.

The democratic socialist character of the Bulgarian school today is borne out by the fact that the children of the working people have unlimited access to it.

Although a law on compulsory elementary education has existed in Bulgaria since 1879, i. e. on the morrow of national liberation, and was broadened in 1921, yet in the conditions prevailing under the monarcho-fascist dictatorship 100,000 children remained outside school every year, while 1,600 inhabited localities had no school of their own.

Today all this has changed. There is not a single village without a school. The school network has become so dense that for all practical purposes it guarantees the realization of compulsory elementary education. Thus, for instance, whereas during 1933-44 there were only 1,928 complete elementary schools, in the school-year of 1958-59 there were over 3,000. In other words, some 1,100 school buildings have been constructed during the fourteen years of people's rule. These schools conform to the most up-to-date requirements and are, as a rule, the most attractive and impressive buildings in the Bulgarian villages. In the 1957-58 school-year there were in all 6,732 schools with 1.2 million pupils. In this way 99.5 per cent of all children of school-going age are today attending schools in Bulgaria.

Parallel with the increase in the number of schools and pupils goes the increase in the number of teachers; since 1943-44 the number of teachers in all schools of general education has increased from 27,843 to 60,000. For the training and qualification of teachers there are now 23 pedagogical schools and 10 teachers' institutes, as well as a special institute for the further training of teachers in Sofia.

Outside this general-education schools system, there are now 6,320 kindergartens (in 1958) for children of pre-school age, where over 280,000 tots are supervised and educated by trained teachers.

To ensure compulsory education, parallel with the increase in the number of schools, the state has turned many elementary schools into partial boarding schools for children from outlying villages and hamlets. At present there are 400 such boarding schools with 12,500 pupils.

An important task facing Bulgarian education is the expansion of polytechnical education so as to bring schooling closer to life and make it more practical. At practically all the general-education schools experimental fields and production sectors have already been established, as well as properly equipped laboratories for physics, chemistry and biology, and technical workshops for woodworking, mechanics, electro-technique, etc., where the pupils get accustomed to manual labour and learn at an early hour to apply in practice the theoretical knowledge which they acquire in school.

In 1958 thirty model polytechnical schools were created, whose experience will gradually be introduced in all general-educational schools.

Particular solicitude is shown for the education and training of talented children. Three high schools of music, one high school of art, and one ballet school have been opened so far for them. Orphans are boarded in special educational institutions, where they are offered the opportunity of all-round development. In the past such institutions did not exist at all; today there are 90 with 6,200 pupils. For physically or mentally deficient children (blind, deaf-and-dumb, etc.) there are 28 special schools, while for children predisposed to tuberculosis there are 15 open-air schools.

The number of secondary schools is being increased as well: in 1943-4 there were 150 gymnasiums; today there are 358 with 176,000 pupils. Almost 85 per cent of those who graduate from elementary school are enrolled in secondary schools. According to United Nations statistics, in 1957 Bulgaria ranked first in the world in the per capita number of graduates from secondary schools, a record of which our country is deservedly proud.

To enable working people who wish to continue (or resume, as the case may be) their education without quitting their job, outside education was introduced at elementary and secondary schools. Those who complete their secondary education in this way, are entitled to enroll in colleges or universities.

A school sector that has particularly flourished of late is that of professional education, which aims at training cadres for the rapidly expanding industry. At present almost 70,000 young men and women attend trade and technical schools. In addition, there exist 138 special technical schools and 141 factory schools, as well as a number of other special schools, directed towards industry.

An altogether new phenomenon, quite typical of the popular democratic regime, is the establishment of evening schools, which enable working people to increase their fund of knowledge and to broaden their cultural background. These have become an important link in the educational system. Here industrial and white collar workers, and co-operative farmers can obtain an elementary or secondary education without quitting their job, and quite a few among them go on from here to colleges and universities. At present there are in Bulgaria 73 evening schools with a total of 18,000 students. Legally these students are entitled to a shorter working day, to an additional paid leave of absence in order to prepare for and take the examinations and to several other privileges.

There are no Little Rocks in the new Bulgaria, for here national minorities are treated on a par with other citizens, in education as in all walks of life. This, of course, was not the case in the bourgeois past, when only 15 per cent of the children of the fairly large Turkish minority attend-

ed the then existing 404 Turkish schools. But today, not less than 99.5 per cent of these children attend their own schools, which now number 1,152. Moreover, all Turkish schools are now state-supported, in common with the Bulgarian schools. For the training of Turkish teachers three pedagogical schools were opened, as well as a department for Turkish language and literature at the Teachers' College and three departments for Turkish students at the University. Over 10,000 young Turkish men and women attend secondary general-education and professional schools, while about 2,000 go to pedagogical schools, colleges and universities.

Much is done for the rest and recreation of pupils and students during the summer vacation. Hundreds of thousands of pupils go to the summer camps in the country's most beautiful mountain, forest and sea resorts. In 1958 the Ministry of Education and Culture alone organized 535 such summer camps, attended by 118,360 young boys and girls, as against the 32 camps with 2,500 pupils which were run in prewar days. In addition, many summer camps for pupils are now being organized by the trade unions and by a large number of co-operative farms.

The development of a new, genuinely democratic culture required the complete abolition of all illiteracy, which in 1944 was still fairly high in Bulgaria, although even then our country compared favourably in this respect with its neighbours and many other countries. A powerful campaign was launched, and as a result of tremendous efforts about half a million adults, primarily among the Turkish minority, went through special courses where they learnt how to read and write. The results of these efforts have been most gratifying: since 1953 there have been no more any illiterates in Bulgaria below the age of 50.

*Higher Education.* The socialist development of Bulgaria has radically affected its higher education. Thoroughly democratized, higher education was given a new aim and content, new directions. The doors of the universities and colleges were flung wide open for the children of the working people, and science ceased to be a privilege of the well-

to-do. The teaching was basically reorganized, new school plans and programmes were worked out which linked theory to practice and adapted science to the requirements of socialist construction.

Higher education in Bulgaria can now look back on impressive accomplishments. The number of higher institutions of learning has increased since 1939 from 5 to 21, that of university faculties from 11 to 30, and that of special subjects from 21 to over 100, while the number of students has jumped from 9,850 to about 35,000. A per capita comparison of students in various countries shows the following picture, highly flattering to Bulgaria (per 10,000 inhabitants): Bulgaria -- 55, Greece -- 21, Great Britain -- 17, Turkey -- 11, Sweden -- 21, Italy -- 34, and France -- 36.

The colleges and universities of Bulgaria train specialists for all sectors of the rapidly developing economy, for the state apparatus, for science, the arts and culture. The engineering and technical staff for socialist construction receives its training at six technical higher schools. In addition, there are Higher Agricultural Institutes in Sofia and Plovdiv, Medical Institutes in Sofia and Plovdiv, Economic Institutes in Sofia, Svishtov and Varna, a Veterinary-Medical Institute, and a Forestry Institute. A great impact on the nation's cultural life is exerted by the Theatre Art School, the State Conservatory, and the Fine Arts Institute. From 1944 to 1957 the higher institutions of learning have trained over 60,000 specialists, including some 10,000 doctors, 9,000 engineers, 6,000 agronomists and zootechnicians, and so on.

In addition to the regular education, a new form of acquiring a higher education, through correspondence courses, has become highly popular in recent years. These are attended by white-collar and industrial workers who have a secondary education and who wish to increase their qualifications without interruption to their regular employment. Some 3,000 candidates are annually enrolled in these courses, and in the current 1958-59 school year their total number amounted to about 10,000.

The successes of higher education in Bulgaria are due in a large measure to the proper selection of the teaching

staff. At present there are 2,400 university instructors, including 400 professors and 350 associate professors. Many of these are highly gifted scientists and scholars, who have acquired an international reputation.

The activity of the colleges and universities is being linked ever more closely to the problems of socialist practice. Their research plans and programmes include themes which are closely connected with such problems. The higher institutions of learning are genuine nurseries of progressive science and culture, where problems of vital importance for the socialist transformation of Bulgaria are studied and solved.

For the training of an adequate staff of specialists with a higher education, for the construction and equipment of new premises and for ensuring students better living conditions, considerable funds are set aside by the state. Within a short period of time several modern buildings were erected for Sofia University, the Higher Institute of Farm Mechanization and Electrification, the Theatre Art School and a number of technical institutions. Huge funds were allocated for the equipment of new buildings and the modernization of existing ones. The sums earmarked in the state budget for higher education, science and the arts during the past few years are 120 times as high as those allotted in prewar days. Almost half the students of today are recipients of scholarships; some 50 million leva are annually set aside for this purpose. In the past there did not exist a single state student hostel; today there are no fewer than 27 such hostels, where approximately 5,000 students live. Some 13,000 students take their meals in special canteens. Much is also being done to safeguard the students' health; there is a special polyclinic and an anti-tuberculosis dispensary for students, as well as medical services in all university premises. There are six student rest-homes in the most beautiful parts of the country, as well as many sports grounds, climbing and tourist centres, etc.

*Bulgarian Science.* Science in Bulgaria has one supreme function today: to combine theory with practice, to be at the service of socialist construction. This has made it necessary to effect an ideological and organizational recon-

struction of all scientific establishments. At present a large army of scientific workers, connected with the Bulgarian Academy of Science (BAS), the higher educational establishments and the various departmental research institutes, is confidently advancing the development of native science and placing it at the service of the people.

In the past BAS had only one scientific research institute and a small number of scientists. Today it forms a solid centre with 36 research institutes, in which 1,800 scientists and technical collaborators are at work. These institutes are equipped with up-to-date laboratories, experimental fields and stockbreeding farms, modern scientific equipment and other facilities. The funds allocated by the state to BAS alone are 40-50 times higher than those allotted to the advancement of science in the past.

Generously subsidized by the state, the research institutes of BAS have made a significant contribution to the solving of a number of important problems connected with socialist construction, and to the flowering of science in our country.

The BAS institutes systematically and purposively co-ordinate their entire research work with the activity of the departmental research institutes, with the chairs at the higher educational establishments, as well as with the tasks set before the state offices, plants and factories and the co-operative farms, and do their utmost to help develop the nation's productive capacity.

In the past few years there has been a pronounced trend toward co-ordinating scientific work on an international scale. A creative relationship, including joint research work, has been established in particular with the Academies of Science of the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, China, Rumania and Hungary.

Making use of the experience and achievements of Soviet and world progressive science, generously subsidized by the state, Bulgarian science is making steady progress.

*Libraries.* Public libraries play a most important and creative role in Bulgaria for the political and cultural education of the masses in a progressive spirit, and for stimu-



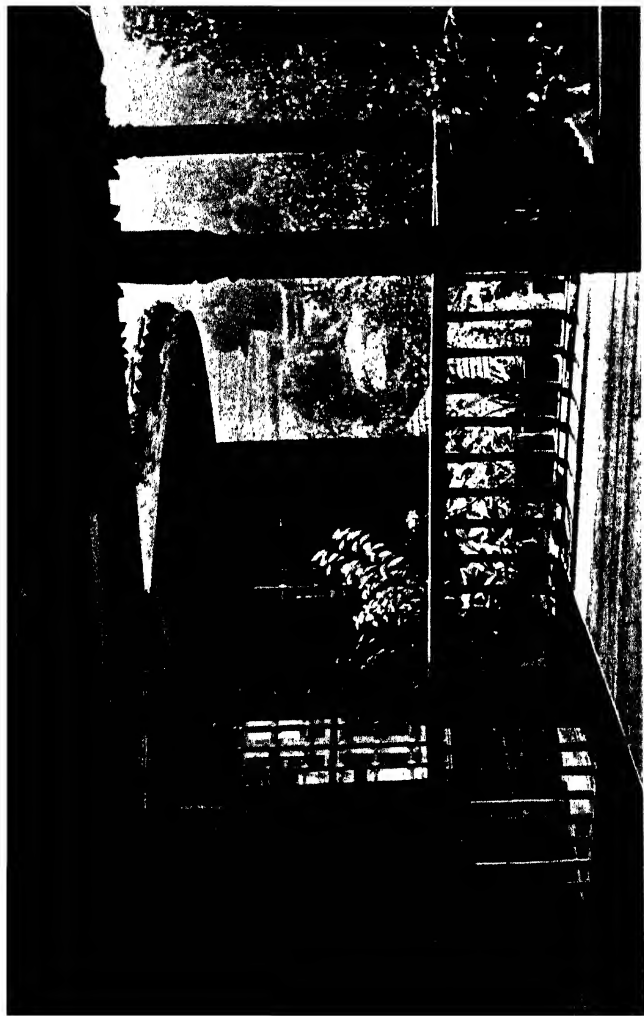
lating their creative self-expression. Under the people's rule the libraries have become a paramount sector on the cultural front, a most active disseminator and propagator of knowledge. The advance made in this field too during the past decade or so can be gleaned from the following figures: the number of libraries has increased from about 4,000 to some 15,000 while the total stock has gone up from less than 4 million volumes to over 15 million. Every year another million books by Bulgarian and foreign authors are added to this stock, while the average annual circulation is 25 million volumes.

The most active agents for the circulation of books are the library clubs, practically all of which have their own buildings with comfortable reading rooms and are run by experienced librarians.

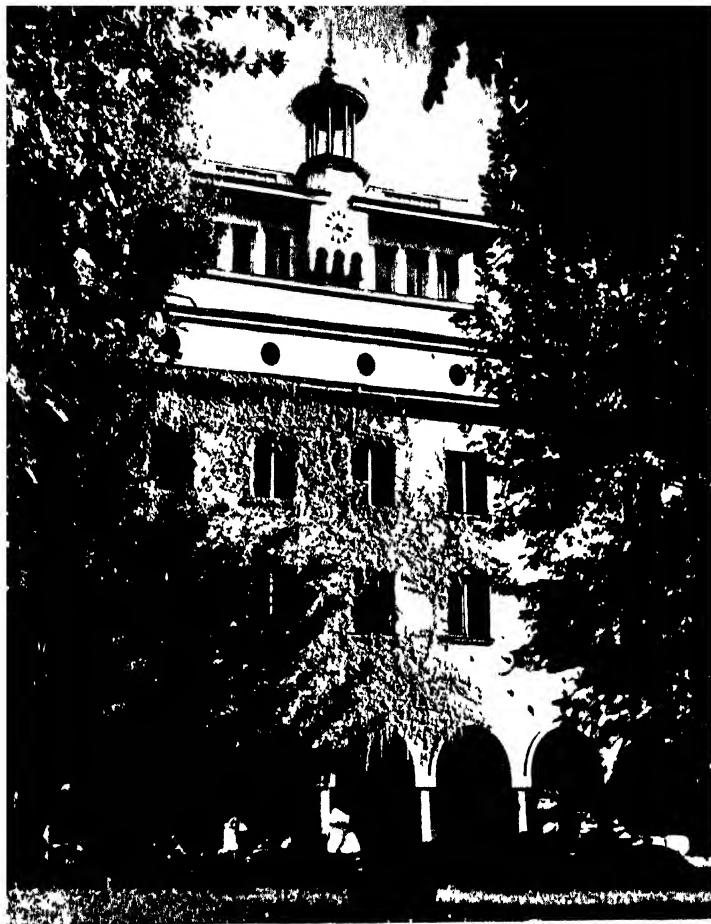
During the past few years libraries have been organized at industrial enterprises, machine-tractor stations and state farms, the main function of which is to increase the professional qualifications of the workers, engineers and technical staff. There are some 6,200 school libraries, whose task it is to help the pedagogic work of the teachers and the proper democratic and cultural education of the pupils. There are also 22 libraries at city and village councils, with a total stock of two million volumes.

One of the prides of Bulgarian culture is the National Library in Sofia, named after the distinguished statesman and scholar Vassil Kolarov. Occupying one of the most attractive public buildings in the heart of Sofia, it carries a basic stock of 700,000 volumes. The National Library is not only the richest and best organized library in the country, but it also performs the function of a national centre in the development of book service.

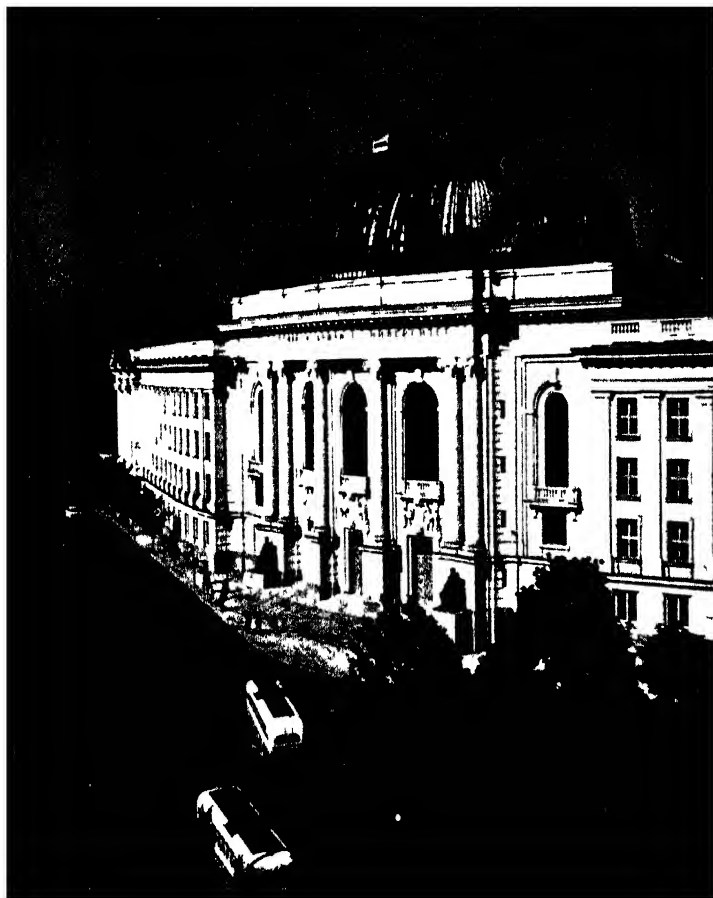
In 1950 a state institute was created for the training of librarians, with a three-year correspondence course. In addition, at the Philological Faculty of Sofia University there is a four-year course in librarianship. There are also 45 annual refresher and qualification courses and seminars. Organizationally the libraries are managed by the various Ministries, departments and organizations, and ideologically and methodologically by the Ministry of Education and Culture.



*Old Bulgarian architecture, Koprivshtitsa: part of the Hadji-Vulkov house*



*Archaeological Museum, Sofia*



*Sofia University*



*Sofia, the National Library*

*Library Clubs.* No description of the progress of Bulgarian culture would be complete without dwelling on the great role and contribution of the library clubs. This original Bulgarian institution sprang up over a century ago in the dark days of Ottoman rule and played a part in the early patriotic education and, in general, in the national liberation struggle of the Bulgarian people. In those days the library clubs were a nursery of popular education and a school of patriotism in which many an ardent fighter for national freedom grew up. Many of the library club workers sacrificed their lives in this struggle, and their names are still held in high respect by the whole nation.

During the years of monarcho-fascist dictatorship the library clubs were centres of anti-fascist struggle and sanctuaries of education. Reviving their old democratic traditions, they strengthened their ties with the masses.

After the establishment of a people's democracy, the library clubs experienced a new period of bloom. Relying on their own experience and achievements in their century-old service to the people, they developed into mass cultural organizations. Their managing boards, supported by the city and village councils, the Fatherland Front and the other mass organizations, are training a wide circle of educators and cultural workers, through whom they carry out their cultural activities. There are now 4,534 library clubs with about 700,000 members in Bulgaria; of those, almost 4,300 function in the countryside. With the aid of the state and of local organizations modern buildings have been erected for these library clubs in many villages. Within a mere decade, 500 new library buildings have sprung up, and in the course of the Third Five-Year Plan another 100 are to be added.

Ideologically the library clubs are under the direct control of the National Council of the Fatherland Front, while in their concrete work they are also helped ideologically, organizationally and financially by the local people's councils and Fatherland Front organizations.

The basic activity of the library clubs is, as their name implies, library work. Every club has its own library and their total book stock exceeds seven million

volumes, including novels, short stories, poetry, scientific, political, technical and children's books. The clubs organize library evenings, exhibitions, book discussions and conferences, meetings with the authors, a library car service and other activities.

An important part of this work is taken up by public lectures. Held in the library halls, especially in autumn and winter, they cover a wide range of current topics in the cultural, economic and political field and in the fight for peace, and considerably enrich the cultural life of the community.

The library clubs are, furthermore, centres of amateur dramatic activities. At present some 7,500 amateur theatre, music and dance groups with about 140,000 members are attached to these clubs. They also organize various other activities and initiatives, prompted by the interests and the cultural needs and aspirations of the working people. They organize foreign language courses, literature and fine arts study circles, and hundreds of music schools for children.

Through the oral and written word, through amateur folk art and broad educational work, through the whole range of their many-sided activity, the library clubs continue to make a notable contribution to the advancement of national culture.

*Monuments and Museums.* Bulgaria is rich in historical and cultural monuments. Several of these have been excavated and studied during the past few years, as a result of consistent archaeological work. Most of them are interesting (and some are unique) works of art and architecture, produced during different historic periods by the peoples who inhabited present-day Bulgaria. The ruins of fortresses, palaces and temples in Pliska, Preslav and Turnovo, the remarkable architectural monuments in Boyana, Nessebur, Plovdiv and Melnik, as well as Rila Monastery, Bachkovo Monastery, the old Bulgarian houses in Koprivshtitsa, Zheravna and Panagyurishtë, all these reveal a rich material and spiritual culture, created during the centuries in Bulgaria. They are monuments to the aesthetic taste and fight-

ing spirit of the Bulgarian people, who defended their national patrimony against the ruthless onslaught of alien enslavers and attempts at forcible assimilation.

The state and the people's councils regularly set aside the funds necessary for the excavation, restoration and popularization of all historic and cultural monuments, which are set in order and systematized.

Nor is the state chary when it comes to the financing of museums. There are at present 105 museums in Bulgaria, of which ten are central ones, and five are memorials; there are 20 special and 37 general museums, and 36 former residences of eminent persons which have been turned into museum houses. Of particular importance are the Museum of the Revolutionary Movement and the Museum of Russian-Bulgarian Friendship, both in Sofia, the Museum of the September 1923 Uprising in Mihailovgrad, the Liberation Museum in Pleven, the Socialist Construction Museum in Dimitrovgrad, the Museum of the Socialist Transformation of the Dobroudja in Tolbukhin, etc. Among the house-museums, commemorating the life and deeds of the nation's outstanding sons, the most noteworthy are those of Vassil Levski in Lovech and Levskigrad, of Hristo Botev in Kalofer, of Hadji Dimitar in Sliven, of Todor Kableshkov in Koprivshtitsa, of Dimitar Blagoev in Sofia, of Georgi Dimitrov in the village of Kovachevtsi near Radomir, and in Sofia, of Geo Milev in Stara Zagora, of the poets Ivan Vazov, Pencho Slaveikov, Hristo Smynenski, Nikola Vaptsarov, Dimcho Debelyanov and of many others.

The museums are important centres of education. Their cultural activity among the masses includes tourist tours with explanations, lectures, temporary and movable exhibitions, and other forms of mass work.

All museums and cultural monuments within the confines of Bulgaria have been proclaimed national sanctuaries and are protected by the law.

*Amateur Drama, Dance, Music.* A cultural form of self-expression which has made a «Chinese leap» forward is the amateur theatrical, dancing and musical activity which, promoted in every possible way, has today come into its



own as a powerful factor for the aesthetic, ideological, political and cultural education of the masses.

The encouragement given to this form of mass self-expression by the state has assumed a variety of forms: at the Ministry of Culture a special Folk Art Home has been created, which guides and supervises amateur art activity, supplies the amateur clubs with suitable programmes and other materials, organizes national and district courses for the training of a leading staff, etc. One of the finest new cultural traditions created in recent years is that of the national review of amateur art, which is held annually and constitutes one of the cultural highlights of the nation's life.

The results of this unflagging solicitude are to be seen everywhere today. Bulgaria now has close on 13,000 amateur groups with a membership of about 300,000. In townships and rural areas, in factories and offices, at co-operative farms and construction sites, at schools and army units, the mass drive for self-expression has given birth to 3,300 choirs, 6,250 theatre troupes, 2,540 dance ensembles, 520 orchestras, four opera and 61 light opera companies, all run on an amateur basis. This artistic drive has also taken deep roots among the Turkish, Armenian and Gypsy national minorities. These amateur art groups, with an admirable élan, popularize various forms of artistic expression and inculcate in the masses a high aesthetic taste and artistic culture. While numerically these groups are mushrooming, they are also making rapid advance in their artistic standards: their experience is increasing and their mastery of their various crafts is also growing. A number of such amateur groups have already been on tours abroad and have participated in international reviews and festivals, winning general appreciation and acclaim for their high artistic standards.

The State Folk Song and Dance Company, which draws its repertory directly from the people, made a number of highly successful tours to Great Britain, France, Belgium and other countries.

A most gratifying and altogether new phenomenon is the emergence of such amateur activity among the working

class. At enterprises and factories there are today some 1,600 groups with almost 50,000 members, specializing in different fields. Thus, for instance, at the Cultural House of the Miners in Kurdjali there is an amateur opera; there is another in the working class centre of Sliven, while at the Varna shipyards the workers have created a symphony orchestra.

A number of amateur groups have won enviable successes both at home and abroad. Thus, for instance, the Bodra Smyana Children's Choir, the Mayakovsky Dance Ensemble and the Sofia Girls' Choir have all proved their worth at international festivals.

The broad scope of such amateur activity testifies to the cultural upsurge of national culture, to the flourishing of popular talents in the vital atmosphere of a People's Democracy. It is a striking expression of the greatly increased role which the masses play today in the development of national art and culture.

*The Press.* As in all other walks of life, so in the field of the press radical changes and transformations have taken place. The daily newspapers and periodicals reflect in their pages the profound changes occurring in the social, economic and political life of the people, the successes and achievements in all spheres of economic and cultural endeavor, as well as reporting world events and the fight for peace. Their popularity has grown by leaps and bounds.

Never before have so many newspapers, periodical and trade papers been published in Bulgaria: there are 292 in all, with a total annual circulation exceeding 530 million. The newspaper is sought after and looked forward to in the most outlying parts of the country. The metropolitan, district, municipal and other newspapers spread information among the people and keep millions of readers abreast of world and home events. The magazines provide the masses with theoretical knowledge in the science, arts and technology, popularizing the special achievements of front-rankers in construction, industry and agriculture.

The total circulation of the eight Sofia dailies is 1½ million; of the 70 provincial newspapers, 1,700,000; of the

166 periodicals, 11½ million; and of the 218 factory and other bulletins, 563,000.

The newspaper with the largest circulation (450,000) and the highest prestige is the *Rabotnichesko Delo* organ of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, followed by *Otechestven Front*, organ of the Presidium of the National Assembly and of the National Council of the Fatherland Front, with 200,000; *Narodna Mladezh* organ of the Central Committee of the Youth Union, with 180,000; *Zemedelsko Zname*, organ of the Bulgarian Agrarian Union, with 125,000; *Troud*, organ of the Central Council of the Trade Unions, with 120,000; etc. The two most popular weeklies are the satirical journal *Sturshel* (Hornet), with 230,000 readers and the children's journal *Septemvriiché* with 220,000.

A number of Bulgarian newspapers and magazines, 28 in all, are published in several foreign languages, including English, and are sent abroad.

The press plays an invaluable educational role in the change to a new life. Its main functions are to serve the socialist transformation of Bulgaria and to teach and inspire the people in a spirit of peace and international understanding.

*Books.* One of the most telling yardsticks of Bulgaria's cultural progress is the rapid growth of book publication and circulation. The new times have aroused in the people an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and cultural enrichment. Soon after the big change-over in 1944 the people's government took over the publication of books. The book became an integral part of the life of the average Bulgarian and a powerful medium for the diffusion of scientific and political knowledge among the masses, for the refinement of the artistic taste of the people, for a new type of education in a socialist spirit, in which the welfare of the individual merges with that of the community, and where the common good reigns supreme. Never before has the Bulgarian reader had such a wide choice of books. The newly-created publishing houses put out a vast number of scientific, belletristic, social, political, children's and other liter-

ature. The publication of agricultural, medical, technical and popular science literature has assumed unprecedented proportions as well as that of books dealing with problems of socialist economy, and with art. During the period 1944-57 a total of 28,645 books and pamphlets were published with a total circulation of 218 million. The average annual circulation of books has jumped from 6.5 million in 1939 to over 20 million in recent years.

The publication of books translated from foreign languages has also greatly expanded. Hundreds of books are published every year from the Russian classic and Soviet literature, from the literatures of the other People's Democracies (barely known in Bulgaria in the past), and from the classic and modern literature of the West European nations and the USA, as well as from a growing number of overseas countries. During 1944-57 a total of 5,110 foreign books were translated with a circulation of 36,406,000. Here we find the best from the literatures of the Soviet Union (including Russian classics), Germany, Great Britain and the United States, France, Italy, India, China, Latin American, Arabic and other countries. During the past few years the Bulgarian reader has been fortunate enough to acquaint himself with national literatures, such as that of Egypt, Iceland, Brazil, Algeria, and other countries, which in the past were practically unknown in our country, as well as with the literature of our immediate neighbours — Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey and Rumania — which before were all too little known.

In turn, the Bulgarian book is becoming known abroad as never before. More and more works of our classical and contemporary authors are being translated into Russian, English, German, French, Spanish and other languages, and are coming to be liked and appreciated far beyond the confines of our country.

In this field too the Turkish minority is getting the full benefit of the general progress. In prewar days no books were published here in the Turkish language, but since 1944 over 1,000 different titles have come off the presses in a total circulation of 4,350,000.

*Radio.* The people's government, which places all the attainments of science and culture at the service of the people, turned the radio into a powerful medium for the socialist education of the masses and an effective weapon for peace and international understanding. In their numerous and diversified broadcasts, the programmes of Bulgarian radio stations, in particular of the Hristo Botev Radio, inform millions of listeners throughout the country of current issues and topics, both home and international; they popularize all achievements in the field of economic and cultural construction, serve as a platform for the exchange of experience and render the rest and leisure of the working people rich and meaningful.

The Bulgarian radio has made a most significant contribution to the musical and cultural education of the masses, to the diffusion of scientific and political knowledge, to higher cultural standards in general. It has won an abiding place in the homes of the Bulgarian people as an invaluable friend, teacher and helper.

Considerable budgetary funds are set aside for the improvement of the radio service. The number of broadcasting stations has increased substantially. Their technical basis and power of transmission have been improved. Radio-broadcasting throughout the country has assumed striking proportions; at present there are 1,212 radio-relay stations. The number of radios in the whole country exceeds 600,000, and in addition there are 450,000 radio loudspeakers in villages, enterprises and offices.

The new television centre, now in construction, is to be completed by 1959. Besides the broadcasting of television programmes, the TV centre will serve as a foundation for the modernization of the country's entire telephone and telegraph technique, which should result in a great improvement in telephone and telegraph communications.

Bulgaria's radio industry has already launched the production of TV receiving sets, in view of the forthcoming inauguration of the television centre.

The construction of a television centre in Sofia is the first step in the introduction of TV transmissions throughout the country. The next stage will include the construc-

tion of television transmitters, connected through radio-relay stations with the other towns in the country. Later Bulgaria will be able to transmit and receive television programmes abroad and, at the same time, to switch in to the general system of international wireless communications.

*Cultural Relations with Abroad.* Bulgaria pursues a policy of peace and collaboration with other nations, regardless of their social system. The development of cultural relations with all countries in the world is an integral part of this policy. The extension and deepening of cultural exchanges and collaboration between nations helps to dispel prejudices and lack of confidence, to establish a spirit of mutual understanding and respect, to strengthen friendship and peace throughout the world.

Engrossed in the peaceful socialist development of their homeland, the Bulgarian people warmly welcome and support this policy of international cultural co-operation. With every passing day the fruits of this policy are becoming more rewarding and gratifying. From year to year the achievements in this field multiply, from year to year the cultural exchange with other countries grows in scope and intensity. A large number of cultural leaders and delegations from countries all over the world pay regular visits to Bulgaria, cordially welcomed as honoured guests. Friendly get-togethers and conversations in the language of good will and sincerity dispel the cobwebs of misunderstanding and slanders and ever more strongly pave the road towards the triumph of peace in the world.

During the past few years Bulgaria has been visited by a number of famous artistic ensembles from the U. S. S. R., China, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Switzerland, and other countries. Some of the best-known violinists, pianists and other artists from the Western world have already given recitals here, and many more are to come. The attention and applause with which the Bulgarian public greets them are an expression not only of high appreciation for the talent and mastery of the great artists, but also of profound sympathy for the artistic accomplishments and culture of other nations.

Bulgaria's cultural relations with the outside world have attained the widest scope and intensity with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Erected on the firm foundation of fraternal trust and mutual aid and cemented every year through cultural conventions and agreements, these relations are becoming ever richer and fuller, assuming ever new forms and producing exceedingly beneficial effects on the development of all fields of science, arts and culture.

*Literature. Beginning of Old Bulgarian Literature.* Bulgarian and Slav literature first made its appearance in the 9th century, with the work of Cyril and Methodius. The two brothers composed the alphabet and established a literary Slav language, maintaining its particularities and its subtleties from a lexical and syntactic point of view. This was a work of genius, of exceptional significance for the historical fate of the Slavs. Bulgarian was the first Slav language to advance in the Middle Ages on the same level as Latin and Greek as a powerful means of cultural development.

The work of Cyril and Methodius was strikingly progressive and democratic for its day. It was progressive because it dealt a blow at one of the most reactionary dogmas of the Middle Ages, that of the three languages; and it was democratic because the Slavs created their own culture by means of letters, one of the greatest cultures of mankind.

That is why the work of the brothers Cyril and Methodius is of tremendous importance for all Slavs, and played a decisive part in the further political and cultural life of all Slav peoples.

*Old Bulgarian Literature from the 9th to the 12th Century.* In this period Old Bulgarian literature was closely related to the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the state. The literature of that day was typically medieval and developed in two directions: official and unofficial. The former was aristocratic and feudal; the latter was of the people and sometimes oppositionary.

The official literature, as well as a large part of the unofficial literature reflected the ideology of the feudal class. At that time literature answered to the needs of the christianized feudal state, and fell under the influence of the limited, one-sided and dogmatic ideas of the church.

The main centres of literature in this period were the literary schools of Ohrid and Preslav, where the most celebrated scholars of their day, Kliment Ohridski, Naoum, Yoan Exarch, Konstantin Preslavski, Chernorizets Hrabur and Presbyter Kozma were at work. Democratic and progressive ideas were set forth in their works, such as the praise and defence of Slav letters, of the Slav nationality and so on.

Kliment's literary work was particularly rich. He wrote many Eulogies and scientific works. The «Panonian Legends», the lives of the brothers Cyril and Methodius, well known from that time on, were attributed to Kliment. Konstantin Preslavski was the first Bulgarian poet, and one of the few Slav poets of that day. Only one work by Chernorizets Hrabur has come down to us, «On Letters», being an ardent defence and praise of Slav letters. Chernorizets Hrabur was the first to work on non-religious subjects in Bulgarian literature.

Popular literature was represented by translations of apocrypha in that period; the first books of the Bogomils were created at that time; they were directed against the feudal order and the corruption rife among the clergy.

*Old Bulgarian Literature from the 12th to the 14th Century.* The Old Bulgarian literature of that day, i. e. of the period when Bulgarian feudalism flourished, did not differ essentially from literature in the first period. The worldly element in literature was mainly reflected in the narratives and stories translated from the Greek. Official literature was under the influence of Hezychasm, a teaching which preached a flight from life, patience and resignation. The capital, Turnovo, was the most important centre of literature in that period, and the celebrated scholar, the Patriarch Evtimi, worked here with his scholars. His followers were Grigori Tsamblak, Konstantin Kostenechki and others. The most popular and



widely read books of this period were those of the Bogomil movement, a popular trend against the feudal lords and the church. Apocryphal books (translated, adapted or original works) were the most popular reading matter with the people. Many apocrypha passed from Bulgaria to the Russians and the Serbs, and some of them were given a highly artistic form in Western literature.

*Old Bulgarian Literature from the 15th to the 18th Century.* The Ottoman invasion and the conquest of Bulgaria by the Ottomans at the end of the 14th century hampered and delayed the country's historical development until the middle of the 19th century. It had the same effect upon literature. Certain of the Old Bulgarian works were preserved in the monasteries, others were smuggled out of the country and taken to Russia. For its part Russian literature, in its newer and more secular garb was later very favourably received in Bulgaria, the ties of relationship and culture between Russians and Bulgarians being thus consolidated.

The churches and monasteries which were not destroyed in the first wave of conquest, and which managed to survive, turned into centres of religion and education. It was in them that the literary tradition, later transferred to the towns, was able to take root. Two figures stand out in this period for the importance of their work, the 16th century Sofia scholars Father Peyu, and Matei Grammatik. The people's resistance to the attempts of their oppressors to force Mohammedanism upon them is clearly apparent in the lives of the saints, which they wrote, and they are imbued with the patriotic idea of preserving the Bulgarian nationality.

In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries the so-called Damascenes, volumes of stories and chronicles with a mixed content, were widespread. The Damascenes suited the people's taste, with their vivid language and their moral and exhortatory character.

Old Bulgarian literature is the oldest Slav literature. Important historical events were reflected in its works, written in the course of nine centuries; among them were the struggle to establish a Bulgarian state, the defence of Slav letters and language, and the people's resistance to their conquerors. It had a beneficent influence throughout Slav literature, thus creating lasting cultural and political ties among all the Slavs.

*New Bulgarian Literature from the Middle of the 18th Century to the Crimean War (1853-1856).* New Bulgarian literature is closely linked with the Revival. The Bulgarian Revival began in the second half of the 18th century and ended with the country's liberation from Ottoman bondage.

The Revival was a complex and many-sided process, which led to the formation of the Bulgarian nation. The people's newly-aroused civic, social and political consciousness was expressed in the movement for secular education in the Bulgarian language (the monks' schools taught the Church Slavonic, and practically all the existing secular schools were Greek), for the freedom of the church and political independence.

The first of the great figures of the Revival was the monk Païssi of the Hilendar Monastery. In 1762 he wrote his celebrated «Slav-Bulgarian History», a fiery pamphlet against Graecism in Bulgaria and a passionate appeal to arouse the national consciousness of the Bulgarians, and get them to resist their oppressors. Païssi's history saved many Bulgarians from falling into error, and exercised a strong influence on a number of people, who later played an important part in the Revival. With his History, Païssi laid the foundations of the new Bulgarian literature.

Sofroni Vrachanski, inspired by Païssi, followed in his footsteps; he extended his work and linked it with the new historic period. Between 1803 and 1805 he wrote his autobiography, «The Life and Sufferings of the Sinful Sofroni», which gave a realistic description of his day, and strikingly revealed the interest in personal life, which

had already been aroused, as well as the people's fate and the terrible conditions of their bondage. Sofroni thus firmly established the work begun by Païssi, placing literature at the service of the people, and bringing his language nearer to their life.

In the second quarter of the 19th century conditions became more favourable for a national and cultural advance. With his «Riben Boukvar» (Fish Primer, known by this name because of the fish which ornamented its cover), Peter Beron, a doctor, firmly established secular education in the schools. A new Bulgarian school was founded in Gabrovo by Vassil Aprilov, for the needs of the new Bulgarian education.

Russia contributed a very great deal to the development of education in the country, with books, teachers and educationists.

In harmony with this general cultural advance, many works of a secular character were written, and the first newspapers and periodicals were published.

The '40s of the 19th century saw the beginnings of the new Bulgarian poetry. The poems of Dobri Chintoulov, the first Bulgarian revolutionary poet (1822-1886) were most popular, and were even sung as folk songs. Chintoulov was the first to express intimate feelings and experiences in his work. He broke with impersonal poetry and brought an individual element into his lyrics. His work was topical and has certain poetic qualities.

*From the Crimean War (1853-1856) to the Liberation from Ottoman Bondage (1878).* The Revival found its fullest expression in the national and political struggles of the time. These went through several stages. The struggle for Bulgarian education and a Bulgarian church was actually a struggle for recognition of the Bulgarian nationality by the Ottoman authorities. The idea of political freedom quickly matured.

This idea reached its highest development in the organization of revolutionary committees throughout the country, and preparations for a nation-wide uprising. The most outstanding representatives of the revolutionary movement

and of the Revival were Rakovski, Levski, Karavelov and Botev.

Georgi Sava Rakovski (1821-1867) was the first ideologist of the revolutionary-democratic movement. As a poet, he enriched Bulgarian poetry with new content and motifs in his «Gorski Putnik» («The Forest Traveller»). With his work, Rakovski stressed the powerful propaganda and social power of poetry.

The first outstanding Bulgarian poet was Petko R. Slaveikov (1827-1895). He raised Bulgarian poetry to a higher level in subject matter, composition and style, in the field of lyrical poetry and the epic, creating the first models of lyrical songs, elegies, satires and epigrams. Slaveikov was the first to use the method of critical realism in Bulgarian literature.

For the needs of the theatre, which made its appearance in the '50s of the last century, the first original experiments were made in the drama. Up to that time, the public's taste had been satisfied with foreign plays, compilations, and ideas or translations mainly taken from the Russian language.

Dobri Voinikov (1833-1878) was the first to write plays in Bulgaria; his work was only of historical literary importance, as his plays suffer from a number of essential weaknesses, from an artistic point of view.

Vassil Droumev (1841-1901), was a truly talented playwright. His historical play «Ivanko» is acted to this day with success. With his short novel, «An Unfortunate Family», Droumev laid the foundations of original Bulgarian belles lettres. Up to then the demand for interesting reading matter had been met with translations of stories and novels.

The last two decades of Ottoman rule coincided with a flowering of Bulgarian revolutionary literature, which developed in Rumania, our neighbour, mainly under the pen of Lyuben Karavelov and Hristo Botev. They had both studied in Russia and undergone the beneficent influence of Russian democratic and revolutionary thought, both as public workers and writers, and they both popularized the revolutionary and democratic ideas, indicating the sole road to freedom for the people, an armed uprising.

Many-sided and fruitful was the activity of Lyuben Karavelov, a great public figure, writer and publicist (1834-1879). In his belletristic works, among the best of which are his novels «Bulgarians of Yore», «Mamma's Darling» and «Is fate to Blame?», Karavelov firmly established the fighting and democratic traditions of Bulgarian literature and confirmed the method of critical realism.

The poetical work of Hristo Botev (1848-1876), one of the first revolutionary leaders of the Revival, marks the zenith of Bulgarian poetry. It is classically finished and is an ideological and artistic whole, as a reflection of the period and of his own personality. Botev's poetic work is small in volume (he only wrote 20 poems) but it bears the mark of genius with its revolutionary subject matter and militant tone. Botev's militant and revolutionary ardour reached its highest and synthetic expression in the heroic ballad «Hadji Dimitar». For the hero who died for the highly human ideal of freedom, Botev wrote the classic verse:

«He does not die who falls in battle  
Fighting for freedom!»

Blending the revolutionary content of the period with the classical form of the verse, Botev created unsurpassed, deathless and eternally contemporary poetry.

He was the most temperamental of Bulgarian publicists. The articles and feuilletons he wrote, are intensely topical, and politically minded, they possess artistic qualities, and are unusually forcefully expressed.

The charm of Botev's personality and his exceptional popularity are due not only to the genius of his poetry, but also to the great deed of the revolutionary, who gave his life to the struggle, fully conscious that the coming generations would prove grateful:

But enough for me is this guerdon  
That people may say of me one day:  
«He died, poor fellow, for Justice,  
For the cause of Justice and Freedom».



*Detail of a fresco in the Boyana Church*





*Detail of the iconostasis in St Marina Church*

*Old Bulgarian architecture in Koprivshtitsa: the covered balcony of a two-storey house*





*Old Bulgarian architecture, Koprivshtitsa: façade of the  
Osslekov house*

*From the Liberation from Ottoman Bondage (1878) to the End of the First World War.* The literature of this period reflects the ardent feelings of affection and gratitude for the Russian people, their Liberators. Memoirs, treating of the heroic struggles waged by the people against their Ottoman oppressors, were numerous in this period. In his classical work «Notes on the Bulgarian Uprisings», Zahari Stoyanov (1850-1889) depicted the life of the Bulgarian people before the Liberation, and the part which he himself took in the Stara Zagora and April Uprisings in 1876.

Ivan Vazov (1850-1921) takes an important place in the literature of this period. With his vast and varied output (poetry, prose and dramatic work), he reflected the joys and sorrows, the sufferings and longings of the Bulgarian people, as well as all the more important events of Bulgaria's old and new history. Ivan Vazov's work is linked with two periods — the Revival, and life in the liberated country. Having made his name as a poet in the revolutionary period, Vazov remained very closely linked with the democratic and progressive trend of Bulgarian literature after the Liberation as well. His poetic work is realistic. In his better-known volumes of poems «Banner and Rebeck», «The Sorrows of Bulgaria», «Salvation», «Slivnitsa», «Sounds», «A Wanderer's Songs», Vazov links events in political life with the people's fundamental interests. The images of the immortal revolutionaries of the Revival have been vividly recreated in the cycle entitled «Epic of the Forgotten Ones».

In his numerous stories Vazov considers the new life after the Liberation from the standpoint of an ardent patriot and humanist.

Vazov stands out with particular force in his belletristic work with his novel «Under the Yoke». In his other novels he depicts life after the Liberation. His short novels describe the life of the petty merchants and craftsmen before the Liberation with great humour and realism («Uncles»), or turn to the distant historic past («Svetoslav Terter», «Ivan Alexander»). Vazov led Bulgarian literature along the line of critical realism.

Vazov's work was the first to appear in other languages. Together with Botev's songs, Bulgarian literature was presented to the other peoples through Vazov's work.

With the process of proletarianizing the craftsmen, which began in the '90s of the last century, and the appearance of industry, new subjects began to be treated of in literature, although in spite of these new phenomena critical realism remained the fundamental method of work. Writers described reality, with all its contradictions, and raised their voices in wrathful protest against the social injustices to which the people were subjected.

The most outstanding representative of critical realism and one of the finest personalities in Bulgarian public life of that day was Aleko Konstantinov (1863-1897). His feuilletons are true artistic annals of his day. Aleko Konstantinov wrote a number of talented travel notes on Bulgaria. He described his journey to America in his best-known travel book, «To Chicago and Back», a vivid and particularly valuable gallery of pictures, amusing adventures, striking portraits of people, witty remarks, and profound thinking on social questions. And his Bai Ganyu, from the short novel of that name, a character whose name has become a common noun, is one of the most significant and vivid social types in Bulgarian literature, and brought his author fame far beyond the boundaries of his country.

As a poet, satirist, writer of fables and publicist, Stoyan Mihailovski directed his pen against the monarch's personal regime, and the moral conventions of his day, despite his vacillations between the most contradictory ideological positions.

In the '90s of the last century, the populist writers made their appearance on the literary stage. The most outstanding among them were T. G. Vlaikov, H. Maximov, M. Georgiev and A. Strashimirov, who all turned their eyes to the tragic picture of the ruined craftsmen and peasants. In some of his works, Vlaikov (the most typical representative of the populist writers, with his «Farm Labourer», «Aunt Gana», «Uncle Staiko», and so on) critically depicts the ruin of the small owners, and in others (chiefly in «Granddad Slavcho's Granddaughter»), the idealized petty bour-

geois life and virtues. The critically realistic description of actual life in Vlaikov's work goes hand in hand with the spirit of the populist ideology, imbued with abstract humanism and philosophical idealism.

The most important phenomenon at the end of the last century was the birth and development of the socialist movement in Bulgaria, which found expression in proletarian revolutionary literature. The foremost representative of proletarian poetry was D. I. Polyanov (1876-1953), while Georgi Kirkov occupied the same place in proletarian prose. The work of these two first representatives of proletarian literature differs from the method of the critical realist writers in its revolutionary romanticism, which directs one to a definite revolutionary ideal — the creation of a socialist society. Thus, the worker-socialist appears in literature as the hero of the epoch. This new literary phenomenon was weak in its beginning, but the future belonged to it.

All these trends, regardless of certain deviations and particularities, represent the democratic line in Bulgarian literature up to the First World War.

The ideology of the new Bulgarian bourgeoisie found its literary expression in individualism, a trend brought to the country from the West. With its extreme subjectivism, individualism did not find sound support in Bulgaria's markedly democratic literature.

The individualistic trends were manifested most strongly in the work of the great poets Pencho Slaveikov, Petko Todorov and Kiril Hristov.

In the history of Bulgarian literature Pencho Slaveikov (1866-1912) takes his place as a great master of verse. His poems with civic themes are of great public significance. Slaveikov is a remarkable master of short lyrical poems, characteristic for the simplicity and intimacy of poetic expression. The intimate lyrical poems collected in «Dream of Happiness» and «On the Island of the Blessed», describe the varied experiences of the hero, into whom the poet merges his own personality. Slaveikov made use of motifs from folk poetry and created certain works remarkable for their artistic power («Inseparable», «Carol-Singers»,

«Epithalamia», etc.). His folk poems and his big heroic epic, «Song of the Blood» are wonderful. With his fine poetry, his exceptionally fruitful work on the cultural front, Pencho Slaveikov takes his place among the greatest creators of Bulgarian literature and Bulgarian culture.

Petko Todorov, the author of many ballads, idylls and dramas, and Kiril Hristov, with the best of his lyrical poems, have their indisputable place in Bulgarian literature.

Symbolism made its appearance in the first decade of the present century as an original continuation of individualism. The first Bulgarian symbolist poems were written by Peyu K. Yavorov, the great Bulgarian poet (1878-1914). The transition to symbolism was a real crisis for him, because in his great poetic work Yavorov presented himself to the Bulgarian people as a democratic poet. In its major part, Yavorov's poetry is profoundly democratic, imbued with sympathy for the mass of peasants, whose life was so full of hardship, and with sympathy for the socialist ideas and national liberation struggles. In his poems «In the Field» and «Hail», which reach the greatest heights of poetry, Yavorov expresses his sympathy for the tragic fate of the peasants, and angrily unmasks social injustice. In his lyrical poems he attained rare perfection. Many Bulgarian poets have benefited from studying his skilled composition.

Among the masters of Bulgarian verse Dimcho Debelyanov (1887-1916) undoubtedly takes a very definite place. His poetry is the confession of an aching and suffering spirit, in which much pain and a great protest against life has accumulated. Debelyanov's verses captivate one with their warmth of feeling, choice of subject and exquisite quality.

The most outstanding representatives of critical realism in the first twenty years of our century are Elin Pelin and G. P. Stamatov.

Elin Pelin (1878-1949) is one of the greatest Bulgarian belletrists and the most striking painter of the Bulgarian village, and also a past master in the art of short-story writing. The sufferings of the peasants are the fundamental subject of his short stories. In his short novel «The Geraks»,

Elin Pelin depicts with psychological truth a number of vivid and moving characters, revealing the decay of the old patriarchal relations and the consolidation of the new capitalist relations in the Bulgarian village.

Elin Pelin is an exceptional artist. His stories move one and sweep one away, his language is emotional and full of imagery, and his landscapes are described with amazing skill and relief.

The work of G. P. Stamatov (1869-1942) is a reflection of the complete corruption of bourgeois society. In his early works (the most typical among which are «Little Sodom», «Viryanov», «The Marzanovs» and «The Paladins») he reflects with realism and deadly sarcasm an impossible atmosphere of crass stupidity and lack of any moral sense or humanity.

*Bulgarian Literature from 1918 to 1944.* The First World War was indeed a national disaster for Bulgaria. Dissatisfaction at the war and the soldiers' mutinies against it, the privations and famine, as well as the enthusiastic echoes of the October Revolution among the people, created an atmosphere which ushered in a new period in the development of Bulgarian literature, the literature of socialist realism. The radiant figure of Hristo Smyrnenski (1898-1923), the poet and revolutionary, rose against the hopeless pessimism which was widespread. His volume of verses entitled «Let There Be Day!» most strikingly expresses the new revolutionary longings. Smyrnenski clearly saw the social injustices of his day. In the big and «vicious» city the victims of capitalist society are subjected to humiliations and he writes of them in: «The Little Brothers of Gavroche», «Woman of the Streets» and «The Flower Girl». But the masses were rising for «a recklessly great deed». The manner in which they rose to revolutionary heroism is revealed in «Coal Hewers».

Smyrnenski's strength as an artist of the revolution found fiery expression in his verses on the proletarian leaders and particularly those who headed the October Revolution. With enthusiastic creative fervour he depicted the great deeds of the Russian proletariat. Hristo Smyrnenski is the

poet of political laughter and mockery. By means of epigrams and grotesque or witty stories he sharply ridicules the sores of capitalist society. In Bulgaria, reaction after the coup d'état of June 9, 1923 found expression in the cruel persecution of all that was democratic. The ardent revolutionary poets Hristo Yassenov, Geo Milev and Sergei Roumyantsev fell as victims of fascism, being tortured and executed without a trial.

Official literature took up an antidemocratic stand, but the fundamental content of Bulgarian literature was determined by the work of progressive and communist writers.

After the First World War critical realism faded and frequently co-existed with conservative romanticism. Yordan Yovkov (1880-1937) showed in his belletristic work the force of simple and unaffected narration. Yovkov's work is highly varied, but he is everywhere a humanist. In his work he sympathizes with the hardships of the peasants and reveals their heroism during the war in a very real manner, typical examples being his short stories «Fellow Countrymen», «The White Troop Train», «Along the Mesta» and «The Last Joy». In certain of his stories, as well as in the short novel «The Harvester», the novel «The Farm on the Frontier» and his plays, Yovkov attempts to reveal deeper social conflicts as well. His book «Legends of Stara Planina» contains his finest writing. In it he depicts with classical simplicity and artistic power the insubmissive haidouks in the days of Ottoman bondage.

In «The Gold Mine», «Vrazhalets» («The Magician») «Golemanov» and his other plays, St. L. Kostov ridicules bourgeois manners and morals, despite certain conservative trends. The first short stories written by Sv. Minkov (1912), one of the most outstanding contemporary satirists, give a true critical reflection of life. In the early lyrical poetry of Elisaveta Bagryana (1893), in which love is the main theme, one feels the rebellion against a world full of conventions and petty bourgeois narrow-mindedness. Her depth of feeling, style and choice of subject, the original imagery and realism in her lyrics have brought Bagryana to the fore as the greatest Bulgarian poetess. Stoyan Zagorchinov in his novel «The Day of Wrath» shows a lively

interest in the people and their struggle for social justice.

The people's literature was cruelly persecuted by fascism. Its first manifestation was linked with the suppression of the September Uprising in 1923, when many writers chose their road and devoted themselves to the service of the people. Among these were Angel Karaliichev, Assen Raztsvetnikov, Nikola Fournadjiev, Nikolai Hrelkov and others.

In his volume of stories entitled «Rye», Angel Karaliichev (1902) expressed his sorrow for the victims and his enthusiasm for the fighters. Assen Raztsvetnikov (1894-1951) mourned the victims and expressed his profound faith in the victory of the rebellious masses in his ballads «Sacrificial Pyres». In his first volume of verses, «Spring Wind», consecrated to the events of September, Nikola Fournadjiev (1903) is a profoundly social poet. Anton Strashimirov's novel «Horo» («Chain Dance») became a revelatory document against the white terror.

One of fascism's early victims was Geo Milev (1895-1925), a highly cultured translator, poet and critic. Geo Milev is a contradictory creative personality, full of incessant ideological and artistic seeking; but the rapid development of events and his alert social sense later determined his position as a public figure and anti-fascist poet. His moving poem «September» is impressive with its truthful reflection of typical moments in the uprising and the cruelty with which it was suppressed; this poem has been translated in a number of foreign languages.

Despite the deadening political atmosphere of the '30s, proletarian and revolutionary literature advanced. For many writers, the method of socialist realism became the creative method of work. The greater part of the Bulgarian writers were realists and anti-fascist democrats. Materialist philosophy and aesthetics found expression in the scientific, journalistic and critical activity of Todor Pavlov. In this period, Lyudmil Stoyanov (1880) rejected the dogmas of abstract symbolism, and sought his inspiration in daily life. He is a talented and indefatigable creator, responsive to the needs of contemporary times and a master of prose and verse. He has written many short stories, plays and



short novels of a critical and realistic character. Among these a special place is taken by his short historic novel «Mehmed Sinap» and the short novel «Colonel Matov's Silver Wedding». His short novel «Cholera» is a passionate outcry against war.

After Hristo Smyrnenski, Hristo Radevski (1903) is the most important representative of proletarian and revolutionary poetry. Radevski's poetry is effective, and inspires people to fight and do great deeds. The poems in his volume «To the Party» and «Pulse» reflect the new revolutionary upsurge of the working class after the '30s. Hristo Radevski has made a definite place in Bulgarian literature with his lyrical poems, his fables and his journalistic activity.

The sound realistic line in the belletristic work of the '30s and '40s is continued in the work of Gyoncho Belev, Orlin Vassilev, Georgi Karaslavov and others. Georgi Karaslavov (1904) began his literary work as a conscious communist. He sought for social subjects and depicted the positive images of fighters from the peasant milieu. Karaslavov's short stories published in the volumes «On the Way», «On Two Fronts», as well as his short novels «Village Correspondent» and «Tatoul», are of this nature. The novel «Daughter-in-Law» is a striking picture of village life and the social contradictions in the village of former days. Karaslavov's narrative holds one's interest fast, and he depicts the profound problems of his day with great artistic power.

In the period of the nation-wide struggle against fascism, a number of proletarian writers and poets came to the fore, such as Nikola Vaptsarov, Tsvetan Spassov, Hristo Kurpachev, Vassil Vodenicharski, Vesselin Andreyev, Ivan Nivyanin and others, who defended freedom arms in hand. The most outstanding of them was Nikola Vaptsarov (1909-1942), a worker, poet and revolutionary who, like Botev blended his poetic work with his direct struggle for the people's happiness. His verses in the volume «Songs of Motors» amaze one with the revelation and scope of lyrical feeling, in which the national element is merged in humanity in general. Vaptsarov's poetry is inseverably linked with the struggles of the working class and the Bulgarian Com-

munist Party in the last years of fascist dictatorship. His work is imbued with militant romanticism and faith in ultimate justice. Entirely engaged with pen and arms in the epic struggle of the people for social justice and freedom, Vaptsarov declares: «But to die when the earth is sloughing off its poisonous mould, when millions revive is a song, yes, that is a song!» And like a true son of the people and poet, Vaptsarov perished at the height of the battle; he was shot by the fascist police in 1942.

After Hristo Botev and Hristo Smynenski, Nikola Vaptsarov is a figure of whom the Bulgarians as a nation may justly feel proud, one who has taken his place among the outstanding progressive poets in the world. In 1952, Nikola Vaptsarov received world recognition, when the World Peace Council posthumously awarded him the Honorary Peace Prize.

*After September 9, 1944.* The new Bulgarian socialist literature is being built up on the best democratic trends in the literature of the past. The writers of today, representatives of socialist realism, are the heirs of all that is most valuable in the national heritage.

The heroic romanticism of national revolutionary struggles which is found in Botev's and Vazov's work has turned, in the work of the socialist realist writers, into heroic romanticism of a higher degree, the romanticism of the fight for socialism.

The most outstanding contemporary Bulgarian belletrist is Georgi Karaslavov, author of many short stories, short novels, novels, etc. His greatest work so far is the novel «Ordinary People», a chronology which is to appear in many volumes. In two volumes of this work which have already appeared, Karaslavov depicts the gradual political growth of the masses under the influence of historical events and the Bulgarian Communist Party. With great skill Georgi Karaslavov has created a number of moving portraits of persons from among the people.

Karaslavov is not only an outstanding contemporary writer and cultural worker, but an active participator in the country's public life.

The struggles of the Bulgarian working class and the socialist movement up to the First World War are depicted by Gyoncho Belev in his novel «Red Dawn», part of a chronicle entitled «Events in the Life of Minko Minin».

Dimitar Dimov, in his novel «Tobacco» presents a broadly painted picture of life in the country, covering the period from the '30s to the end of the Second World War. The world of the tobacco magnates is depicted with particular force; in alliance with the German occupiers these men dictated the country's fateful anti-people's policy. Dimitar Angelov recreates the dramatic period of the people's struggles against the fascist dictatorship in Bulgaria in his novel «For Life and Death».

The legendary life and deeds of the fighters against fascism, of the partisans, the greatness of their patriotism and heroic selfdenial is to be found in many lyrical and belletristic works. Several gifted young partisan poets perished, pen and rifle in hand; among them were Tsvetan Spassov, Hristo Kurpachev, Vassil Vodenicharski, Kiril Madjarov, Atanas Manchev, Ivan Nivyanin and others. The poet Vesselin Andreyev wrote most of his partisan songs in the partisan trenches, between battles. The lyrical hero of his poetry is the communist fighter. Andreyev's verses are distinguished by their simplicity and deep penetration into the inner psychological state of his hero. Many lyrical poems by David Ovadia are consecrated to subjects taken from the life of the partisans, while in the poem «Vela», Dora Gabé praised the deeds of Vela Peyeva, the Bulgarian national heroine, who perished in the struggle.

The partisan movement was extensively reflected in the memoirs which have appeared on the subject. In «Partisans of the Sredna Gora» by Kosta Lambrev, «Notes of a Political Commissar» by Ivan Zourlov, and «Not Long Ago» by Slavcho Trunski, and in a number of other memoirs by living participators in the movement, we find a true picture of the deeds, life and characters of the partisans in their struggle against fascism.

Bulgarian writers have dedicated numerous works to the participation of the Bulgarian army in the defeat of Nazi Germany. The most important of these are the poems «Goran

Gorinov» by Lamar, and «The Fire» and «Poem of the Rifle» by Mladen Issayev. The heroism of the Bulgarian soldiers in the Patriotic War has been truly and convincingly recreated by Pavel Vezhinov, in his short novels «The Second Company» and «Zlatan», as well as by Ivan Martinov in «The Drava Flows through Slav Lands», and in the stories of Chelkash, the lyrics of Radoi Rallin, etc.

Works on the distant historic past of the people are also to be found in contemporary Bulgarian literature. The history and struggles of the Macedonian people for spiritual and political liberation are depicted in the moving trilogy by Dimiter Talev, «The Iron Candlestick», «The Bells of Prespa» and «Ilinden» (St. Ely's Day). Stoyan Zagorchinov, author of «The Day of Wrath», has published a new historical novel, «Festival in Boyana».

Socialist construction is the main theme in Bulgarian literature today. The radical changes which are taking place in the Bulgarian countryside, in the souls of the Bulgarian peasants, are the subject of numerous works. Andrei Goulyashki describes them in his novels «The Machine-Tractor Station» and «The Village of Vedrovo». These works are a successful attempt to show the contradictions and difficulties in contemporary village life, and the profound changes in the personal fate of the people who are creating the new village. St. Daskalov, the belletrist, has devoted his pen almost entirely to the new life in the countryside. The short stories of the talented writer Kroum Grigorov, collected in the volumes «Along a New Road», «Owners of New Houses», and «Chairman of the Village Council», also have village life for their subject.

In the field of belles lettres a number of other writers are actively at work; among them are Emilian Stanev, Angel Karaliichev, Ivailo Petrov, Lyuben Stanev, Dragomir Assenov, K. Voinov and Seraphim Severnyak.

The predominating genre in poetry in the years immediately following September 9, 1944, was that of political lyrics. Hristo Radevski, Mladen Issayev, Nikola Lankov, Angel Todorov and other poets, warmly supported the People's Government, and ardently helped to establish it firmly. In the poetry of B. Dimitrova, B. Rainov, Valerii Petrov,

B. Bozhilov, Georgi Djagarov and P. Matev, the fundamental tone is one of an energetic and optimistic mood, full of *joie de vivre* and faith in the bright future. A number of young poets, such as Ivan Radoyev, D. Zhotev, N. Zidarov and St. Penchev, as well as many others, have shown considerable promise. The theme of the defence of peace has inspired almost all poets. In this direction the verses of Elisaveta Bagryana, published in a volume entitled «Five Stars», the political poems of Lyudmil Stoyanov published in «Beyond the Iron Curtain» and «There in the West» by Valerii Petrov, show considerable success. The long poem has found its masters in Lamar («Maritsa» and «Grozden»), T. Harmandjiyev («Generation»), in N. Maranzov, I. Milchev, and D. Metodiev.

A number of writers are at work in the sphere of humour and satire. Here the most successful works are «It's All Up with Us» by Georgi Karaslavov, «A Parcel from America» by Svetoslav Minkov, fables by Hristo Radevski, satirical verses by Radoi Rallin, and short stories by Peter Neznamov.

Bulgarian writers have also created new plays of undoubted literary and dramatic value. The subjects treated by our playwrights are the same as in the other genres of Bulgarian literature. Orlin Vassilev wrote «Alarm», «Love» and «Happiness» all of which were given a warm welcome and aroused interest both at home and abroad. Kroum Kyulyavkov («The Fight Goes On» and «The First Blow»), Kamen Zidarov («Royal Clemency») and Lozan Strelkov («Reconnaissance») have written plays with the people's past struggles as their subjects.

In the sphere of children's literature, besides the old masters Elin Pelin, Ran Bossilek and Angel Karaliichev, a number of new and talented writers, such as Assen Bossev, Leda Mileva, and Tsvetan Angelov have made their appearance. The following books are particularly popular with children: «Mitko Palaouzov» by M. Marchevski, «School for the Fearless» by Emil Koralov and «The Traces Remain» by P. Vezhinov.

Present-day Bulgarian poets and writers reveal with thoroughness in their verses, poems, short stories and short

novels, novels and plays the problems of the new times, and truthfully depict the impressive construction of socialism and its creators and heroes. In this way they actively participate in building up the new socialist culture and social order, and at the same time contribute to the socialist humanistic education of the people.

*Music.* Bulgaria's musical folklore is exceedingly rich and diversified. In the course of long centuries the people have created a music which, although bearing the marks of Slav origins, yet has typical national features. It is characterized primarily by its chanting and richly ornamented melodious line, its rhythmic metric structure and, above all, by its minor character. Its distinguishing features are the irregular 7/16, 5/8, 7/8, 9/8 and 15/16 beats, which are found primarily in the original and most lively folk dances, Horos and Ruchenitsas chain dances. In their songs the Bulgarian people have expressed their joys and sorrows, their struggles and hopes for a better and freer life. The Bulgarian song is rich in its thematic variety; some songs are connected with everyday work — harvesting, ploughing, sheep herding and wandering abroad in quest of a livelihood; others are connected with traditions and customs — weddings, working parties, mourning; still others reflect the fight for freedom — Haidouk, epic, recitative and other songs.

The Bulgarian folk song is usually sung without instrumental accompaniment. Inversely, instrumental performances most frequently go without songs. The most common folk instruments are the bagpipe, the rebeck, the wooden flute and the lute.

Individual musical works made their appearance only after Bulgaria's national liberation in 1878. The first native composers drew their main inspiration from the rich folklore, refashioning the folk songs or else writing music exclusively in a folk spirit. Among the composers of the first generation, the following names stand out: Emanuel Manolov, A. Boukoreshtliev who composed and collected folk songs, Dobri Hristov — the most prominent composer of that generation, Panayot Pipkov, Maestro Georgi Atanasov, who wrote the first Bulgarian operas of any consequence.

After World War I a new generation of composers came to the fore, who worked in all major musical genres. Foremost among them is Pancho Vladigerov, a highly gifted musician with a rich technique of instrumentation and a profound knowledge of the Bulgarian folk song. His best-known works are: Bulgarian Vardar Rhapsody, Jewish Poem, Bulgarian Suite, May Symphony, four concertos for piano, a concerto for violin, as well as many other symphonic, chamber and solo compositions. Vladigerov is the foremost Bulgarian symphonist, whose works have long since passed beyond the confines of the country and won international recognition.

Another eminent composer of the same generation is Petko Stainov. Using the media of the folk song but without making direct use of folk motifs, Stainov has produced works which stamp him as a musical realist whose heart is close to the people. His best works are symphonies: the Thracian Dances suite, the symphonic poem Thrace, Legend, the suite A Tale, two symphonies and other minor compositions.

Among the composers who emerged during the '30s and are still active today, Lyubomir Pipkov, Philip Koutev, Vesselin Stoyanov, Assen Karastoyanov, Marin Goleminov, Parashkev Hadjiev and Alexander Raichev deserve particular mention.

The people's government has ensured the finest conditions for the development of music. The composers have rid themselves of the noxious influences of formalism and have produced a number of realistic works, which reflect the struggles of the Bulgarian people for freedom and for a happy life, the exploits of their heroes — the Partisans in war and the front-rankers in peaceful work — and the general joy resulting from the overthrow of the fascist regime. The cantatas of P. Koutev — September Ninth; of S. Obretenov — Fight for Peace; of V. Stoyanov — Let It Be Day; of A. Raichev — He Does Not Die, and of others mirror the elan of the Bulgarian people in their fight for the overthrow of fascism, the great development in their work and their readiness to struggle to maintain peace. P. Stainov and P. Vladigerov, G. Ivanov and others have written

symphonies which are deeply connected with folklore and the people's struggles. A number of choir and mass songs have also been written, which have become quite popular.

The symphony orchestra has made considerable progress. In addition to the State Philharmonic Orchestra in Sofia, there is now the State Symphony Radio Orchestra and other state symphony orchestras in Plovdiv, Varna, Roussé, Bourgas, Pleven, Dimitrovgrad, Razgrad, Vidin, Kolarovgrad and Tolbukhin. This development has greatly contributed to the popularization of symphonic music among the masses.

Bulgarian musical performers have also made big strides. The conductors Sasha Popov, Vladi Simeonov and Assen Naidenov are well-known abroad — as are the pianists Prof. T. Yankova, L. Encheva, Otto Liebig, the violinists Prof. N. Simeonova, Vassil Chernaev, Boyan Lechev and Peter Hristoskov, and Bulgaria's foremost opera artists Nelly Karova, Mihail Popov, Raina Mihailova, Hristo Brumbarov and, particularly, the promising young singers Nicolai Gyaourov, Dimiter Ouzounov and Katya Popova. This trio is on its way to achieve world fame. But there are already quite a few Bulgarian musicians and artists who have won world fame: the pianists Yurii Boukov, Ventseslav Yankov and Donka Kourteva, the singers Boris Christoff, Todor Mazarov, Elena Nicolai, and Lyuba Velichkova, who under her stage name Lyuba Velich has become the star of the London Covent Garden and New York Metropolitan Opera.

During the past few years a large number of Bulgarian artists have excelled at international musical contests and festivals. The singers Nicolai Gyaourov and Dimiter Ouzounov — who, incidentally, at the time of writing (December 1958) are making their debut in the Paris Grande Opera and New York Metropolitan Opera — won the top prizes at the international vocal contest in Paris in 1955, while a number of other Bulgarian singers and instrumentalists received prizes and high distinctions at international contests in Geneva, Prague and Moscow as well as at the World Youth Festivals.



Bulgaria has today a State Conservatory with higher and secondary courses, which trains cadres from among the most talented forces for all branches of musical art — composition and execution.

*The Opera.* The Bulgarian opera is of fairly recent origin. When Europe was composing music, the sad clinking of slave chains was heard in the Bulgarian lands. While France, Germany and Russia were attaining brilliant peaks in operatic art and Rossini's inimitable music was being composed in Italy, Bulgaria was plunged in the darkness of the five-centuries-long Ottoman rule, which retarded all social, economic and cultural advance with its deadly grip. Five long centuries, completely lost for art, for culture, for music! That is why when the sun of freedom made its appearance in Bulgaria, the people pressed eagerly towards the wonderful world of art.

One of the new arts to emerge in the reborn nation was that of the opera. A most fortunate event for the early development of this art in liberated Bulgaria was the visit of an Italian travelling troupe under Massigni. For the first time, the works of the Italian classic opera resounded under the sky of Bulgaria. Further impetus to the development of the new art was given by a number of young Bulgarians who, after studying in Russia, returned home to acquaint their countrymen with the beautiful arias of the Russian classical opera.

The real pioneers of the opera were, however, a trio of talented young Bulgarian musicians who had studied in Prague and who in 1890 founded the Sofia Opera Troupe: the singers Dragomir Kazakov and Ivan Slavkov and the composer Angel Boukoreshtliev. As a first step, to reinforce the scant Bulgarian forces, a number of Italian and Czech artists were invited to Sofia. During its first years of existence the newly-created opera had to wage a stiff uphill struggle, for it could count on no moral or material support on the part of the state. In great contrast to the reprehensible indifference of these official circles was the love and affection of the Bulgarian public, which closely followed the destinies of this still unknown but stirring art form.

The first opera performance was staged in Sofia in 1891. Although only a few acts of the operas «Troubadour» and «The Merry Widows» were produced before the metropolitan public, the success was tremendous. This premiere was followed by the operas «Faust» and «Troubadour», both complete but for the choir scenes and an orchestra. During the next two years a number of operas were shown, including «Carmen», «Aida», «Traviata», «Lucia di Lammermoor», «The Beautiful Galathea», «Ernani» and «Cavalleria Rusticana». Gradually the opera troupe completed its cast. The Czech Wiesner was engaged as conductor, an orchestra as well as a choir were formed. Thus, despite the great material hardships, the operatic art found a most cordial welcome among the Bulgarian public and gradually acquired professional proficiency and maturity.

But in the end the utter indifference of the state, which categorically refused to grant any subsidies, brought this fine initiative to an untimely demise. For almost fifteen long years, until 1908, Sofia was deprived of its opera. The talented Bulgarian singers studied and practiced far from their country, mainly in Russia.

The next and decisive chapter in the history of the opera begins in 1908, when a considerable number of Bulgarian singers, graduates of Russian, Italian and Austrian schools, returned home and organized the Sofia Opera Company. Its main forces were P. Dimitrov, Zhelyu Minchev, Stoyan Nikolov, Dimiter Ivanov, Maria Vassileva and Zlatka Kourteva. The enthusiastic young artists presented to the hungry Sofia public scenes from the operas «Faust», «Troubadour», «Ivan Susanin», «Eugene Onegin», «Carmen», «Ruslan and Ludmilla». In 1910 new young forces, returning from abroad, joined them, including the singers Olga Orlova, Mara Nevashmalova, Katya Stoyanova and the brilliant tenor Peter Raichev. Now feeling more sure of itself, the opera troupe staged Rubinstein's «Demon» before an enthusiastic audience, continuing at the same time its regular performances of «Faust» and «Traviata».

In 1911 the opera troupe, reinforced by such fine young talents as Stefan Makedonski, Christina Morphova, Anna Todorova, Tsvetana Tabakova and Doichina Kolarova,

staged the first performance of the Bulgarian opera «The Poor Woman» by Emanuel Manolov, as well as the opera «Kamen and Tsena», specially composed, jointly, by the Czech Kautsky and the Bulgarian Ivan Ivanov, for the Bulgarian stage. The same year two new Bulgarian operas were performed: Georgi Atanasov's historical opera «Borislav» and Dimitir Hadji-Georgiev's «Tahir Begum».

The brilliant success of these first Bulgarian operas and their enthusiastic reception by the public finally induced the government to recognize the national opera and to grant it a subsidy. During the following years a number of operas were produced from the Russian, Italian and West European classics, as well as the first operas written by Bulgarian composers. This phase continued until 1922, when the opera was taken over by the state.

In this way the opera not only imposed itself as a factor for the cultural development of the nation but also produced a number of artists of international repute. In the '30s, they included Ivan Mihailov-Stoyan, Ivan Voulpé, Katya Stoyanova, Stefan Makedonski, Christina Morphova and Peter Raichev.

Parallel with the development of the Sofia National Opera there were a number of initiatives on the part of local enthusiasts and amateur opera singers in the provincial towns of Roussé and Stara Zagora. Although their artistic standards were considerably below those of the metropolitan opera, they performed a most useful function in acquainting the provincial public with some of the finest European operas, thereby greatly contributing to the cultural progress of these two towns. Moreover, they produced a continuous stream of new musical talents who later, after receiving academical training, appeared on the Sofia stage.

The development of the national opera from 1930 to 1944 is characterized by the appearance of a talented new generation of singers, who considerably raised the artistic level of the opera and spread the fame of Bulgaria far beyond its confines. It was during this period that two of the greatest Bulgarian operatic singers began their artistic career: the bass Mihail Popov and the baritone Hristo Brumbarov, both Italian graduates. These two fine singers are still very

active, both on the stage and as professors of music. Other distinguished artists of that period, whose names are recorded in the golden pages of the chronicle of the Bulgarian opera, are Lyuben Minchev, Katya Spiridonova, Georgi Hincev, Atanas Ivanov and Peter Zolotovitch. But the most important singers of that decade, who made brilliant musical careers abroad, are Todor Mazarov, who at the call of Bruno Walter joined the Vienna Opera, but appeared also in many Italian and other European operas; Elena Nikolai, a fine singer and actress, who is still starring in the biggest Italian opera theatres; Lyuba Velichkova (Velich), primadonna of the New York Metropolitan Opera, who before that sang at the Sofia Opera, in Vienna, Munich and other European cities; and Boris Christoff, the most famous of them all, a baritone whose reputation all over Europe and America is such that he is currently dubbed the second Chaliapine.

The Bulgarian opera, treated like a foster child by the bourgeois state but warmly encouraged by the highly musical Bulgarian public, began to vie with the more advanced operas in Europe, giving to the world a galaxy of fine singers. False pathos, pose and theatrical mannerism are alien to the Bulgarian opera singers, whose artistic make-up through the schooling they have received at the Sofia Opera is primarily conditioned by the Russian realist interpretation of images as well as by the highly emotional and expressive musical art of Italy, brought to Bulgaria by the Italian graduates. Under the influence of these two schools and thanks mainly to the positive foundation of the Russian realistic opera school, modern Bulgarian operatic art and its foremost representatives grew up and developed.

The rapid progress of the national opera gave wings to the work of the Bulgarian composers. They wrote a number of operas, some of which were very popular: Georgi Atanassov's «Gergana» and «Tsveta», Vesselin Stoyanov's «Women's Realm» and «Salambo», Pancho Vladigerov's «Tsar Kaloyan», Lyubomir Pipkov's «Yana's Nine Brothers» and the ballets «The Dragon and Yana» by Hristo Manolov and «Nestinarki» (Fire Dancers) by Marin Goleminov.

With the establishment of a popular democracy in 1944 the development of the national opera received a strong impetus. No longer did the subsidy problem constitute a worry, for ample funds were now made available by the state for the nation-wide promotion of operatic art. State opera houses were opened in Plovdiv, Roussé, Varna and Stara Zagora, and launched into creative activity of a high artistic order. The amazing progress recorded by these provincial operas was made strikingly clear at the second national review of opera, ballet and light opera, held in Sofia in 1958. Six opera troupes with their own choirs, orchestra and solo ensembles staged opera performances, the high artistic standards of which were warmly applauded by the Sofia public.

In addition to these state operas, there are a number of amateur operas and light operas in the provinces which stage regular performances. Among these, the opera companies of Sliven, Vratsa and Bourgas deserve special mention.

The flowering of operatic art during the past 14 years of the people's rule has had a most beneficial effect upon the work of the Bulgarian composers. Lyubomir Pipkov's «Momchil» and Vesselin Stoyanov's «Sly Peter» are operas of distinction. Written with professional mastery, in a modern musical language cleverly interwoven with popular folk motifs, «Momchil» gives a vivid portrayal of the past struggles of the Bulgarians for freedom and national independence.

The contemporary repertory of the different operas in the country is rich and diversified. Among the most popular operas are «Ivan Susanin», «Ruslan and Ludmilla», «Eugene Onegin», «Faust», «Prince Igor», «Carmen», «Traviata», «The Barber of Sevilla», «Ernani», «Tosca», «La Boheme», «Pagliacci», «Madame Butterfly», «Lucia di Lammermoor», and «The Bartered Bride». The performances of «Boris Godunov», «War and Peace», «The Magic Flute» and «Othello» at the Sofia Opera may be considered noteworthy artistic achievements.

Scores of promising young singers have been developed; many of them started out as complete amateurs. Outstanding among the young forces which are maturing and gradually

taking the place of the older generation are Nikolai Gyaourov, a powerful bass who in 1955 won the Grand Prix at the Paris vocal contest and who has already starred in the best operas of France, Italy and the Soviet Union; Dimiter Ouzounov, who won the first prize for tenors at the same Paris contest in 1955 — a frequent guest performer at the Paris Grand Opera, in Moscow and Leningrad, and who recently made his debut at the New York Metropolitan Opera; Nikolai Nikolov and Lyubomir Bodourov, laureates at a number of international contests; Konstantin Shekerliiski and Nikolai Gaubich, baritones with a wonderful vocal range, frequent guests at Soviet and other operas; Katya Popova, a soprano who has sung with great success at the Paris Grand Opera and at several other European operas; Alexei Milkovski, Nadya Afeyan, Nadya Sharkova, Lilyana Koshloukova, Todor Kostov, Maria Bohachek, Penka Koeva and many other Sofia and provincial opera singers.

The Bulgarian light opera, reorganized in 1948 into the Stefan Makedonski Musical Theatre, has also made a signal contribution to the enrichment of the genre. This theatre has made remarkable progress of late, relying chiefly on such tested forces as the People's Artists Assen Rouskov and Mimi Balkanska, flanked by many new talents. Its best performances to date are: «Beautiful Helen», «The Bat», «Gypsy Baron», «Countess Maritsa», «If I Were King», the Soviet light operas «Willful Wind», «Mutual Love», «Trembita» and the ballet «Aladar's Naughty Tricks», as well as the new Bulgarian light operas «Aika» by Parashkev Hadjiev, «Rebel Song» by Georgi Zlatev-Cherkin, «The Maestro's Love» by Victor Raichev, and finally the comic opera «Once Upon a Time» by Parashkev Hadjiev.

Bulgaria is a land noted for its fine singers. In the past, however, most of them were left to themselves and perished before ripening for the world of art. Today the state does its utmost to discover outstanding talent in time, and to foster it in every possible way. Thousands of amateur music groups are educating many gifted singers, men and women, and the most talented among these continue their training in special schools and courses. The best individual performers at the national reviews of amateur art are immedi-

ately offered scholarships to specialize in their particular field at schools of music in Bulgaria or abroad.

A leading factor in the musical education of Bulgarian singers and young operatic musicians is the State Conservatory in Sofia, which is supported by the state secondary schools of music in Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna.

Ballet art too has made astounding progress. This is a branch of art which, for all practical purposes, had neither traditions nor any major manifestations prior to 1944. Its existence, properly speaking, began in 1945, when the great Soviet ballerina Nina Anissimova gave several performances in this country. She was followed by her even more illustrious compatriot Olga Lepeshinska, as well as by the Soviet masters of ballet, Nikolai Holfin and Vladimir Belii. Nina Anissimova produced the Soviet ballet «The Fountain of Bakhchisserai» on the Bulgarian stage, which created a furore and won great popularity and prestige for this art. In later years particularly valuable was the aid of Nikolai Holfin, who directed the comic ballet «Misers» by Hertel, «Dr. Dolittle» (for children) by Morozov, and Glinka's «Red Poppy». The latter, in particular, represents one of the peak performances of the Bulgarian ballet, and continues to be performed with success.

A major event in the young history of the Bulgarian ballet was the staging of the first postwar Bulgarian ballet, Alexander Raichev's «Haidouk Song». Written with great professional proficiency, imbued with the national spirit, and with melodious music full of imagery, this ballet represents the selfless struggle of the Bulgarian people against the Turkish enslaver. At present three ballets are being shown with considerable success on Bulgarian stages: «Swan Lake», «Esmeralda» and the Bulgarian ballet «The Dragon and Yana».

The Bulgarian ballet has produced a number of talented dancers, such as Assen Gavrillov, Lyuba Kolchakova, Lili Beron, Nina Kiradjieva, P. Stoitsov, Kroum Yankov and N. Izov. Most of these have already won awards at national festivals and international contests. In 1951 at the World Youth Festival in Berlin the Bulgarian production of «Red Poppy» received the highest recognition.

Bulgarian operatic artists are inspired by the great tasks of the new times, standing as they do in one front with all the other creators in the arts, in science and in education. They are enthusiastically creating a realistic, moving new art, with which they fully participate in the development of a new socialist culture.

*The Theatre.* The Bulgarian theatre, when compared with the West European and Russian classical theatres, is still quite young: only two years have elapsed since its 100th anniversary was celebrated by the nation. However, despite its relative youth, it has such fine accomplishments to its credit, both as regards stage direction and acting, that it can well stand a comparison with the more illustrious theatres in the world.

The beginnings of the Bulgarian theatre go back to 1856, when in Shoumen (now renamed Kolarovgrad) an amateur troupe, headed by the teacher Sava Dobroplodni, staged the latter's «Mihail the Mouse-Eater», which may be considered the first original Bulgarian play. The country was then still under Turkish rule, but it was already gripped by a powerful movement of National Revival. In contrast to the Russian and West European theatre, whose emergence was prompted by the requirements of the church and the palaces, the Bulgarian theatre sprang up under much more democratic conditions. The first performances were held in schools and library clubs, and from its very inception the native theatre was called upon to take a most active part in the revolutionary struggle for freedom and national independence. Concealed from the eyes of the alien enslavers, with poor settings, on straw mats and behind a lowered carpet instead of a curtain, under the failing light of candles and without any special costumes, the first actors of the Bulgarian stage passionately held aloft the torch of freedom and fanned the flames of the revolution.

The Bulgarian theatre, without passing through the symbolism and scholasticism of religious representations, through the pomp and splendour of the palace stage, from its very first steps found its proper bearings in the hearts of the ordinary public. Contemporary plays were presented which,



in addition to providing a welcome cultural entertainment, carried a potent patriotic impact.

This realistic tradition of the Bulgarian theatre has continued now for hundred years. Today it is still true to its original tone, close to the emotions, the woes and the aspirations of the people.

The first major Bulgarian play, which appeared during the early period of the theatre and was staged with great success, was Vassil Droumev's «Ivanko». Although written as far back as 1872, this play is so full of pure patriotism and dramatic impact, its characters are still so much alive, that it continues to be staged in Bulgarian theatres. Its author is considered to be the founder of the national drama.

The country's liberation from the Ottoman yoke gave a powerful impetus to the development of the theatre. In a number of towns semi-professional and amateur troupes were organized, which continued the democratic traditions of the National Revival period and gradually brought the artistic level of the national theatre up to the high standards of the West European and Russian theatre. Milestones in the development of the national theatre are the creation in 1888 of the Osnova (Foundation) Drama Troupe in Sofia and of the Sulza i Smyah (Tears and Laughter) Drama Troupe, founded in 1902 and which subsequently grew into the Bulgarian National Theatre, inaugurated solemnly in 1904.

Although the conditions under which they had to live and act were appalling, the first genuinely professional actors of the Bulgarian National Theatre, fired by rare enthusiasm for their art and love for their people, created a solid foundation, upon which during the next few years there developed a number of brilliant actors and actresses.

The first generation of professional actors came from the amateur stage and some of them later attended theatre art schools in Paris, Vienna and Berlin. The nucleus of this remarkable generation of actors, however, which produced several stage stars of international repute, were graduates of the Russian school of drama, a school close to Bulgarian theatre traditions and temperament. The Russian drama school and the Russian educators imposed themselves as a guiding force in the development of our theatre.

During the two decades following the inauguration of the National Theatre such brilliant actors as Vassil Kirkov, Sava Ognyanov and Adriana Boudevska dominated the native stage. With their superb talent this trio of first-class actors gave flesh and blood to a whole series of most difficult dramatic characters from the world's classics. Thanks to some of their peak achievements, the Bulgarian National Theatre joined the ranks of the best theatres in Europe some fifty years ago. No less an authority than Kachalov, the great Russian actor and one of the finest Hamlets ever, told Vassil Kirkov after seeing him act in Sofia: «You are a better Hamlet than I am. Your Hamlet and Adriana Boudevska's Ophelia are unexcelled. . .»

The famous Bulgarian theatre trio became a quartet when Krustyu Sarafov scaled the heights to emerge as the greatest of them all. His acting was a brilliant combination of great simplicity, captivating sincerity and unusual realistic forcefulness. Krustyu Sarafov, the most talented Russian pupil of all the Bulgarian actors and pioneers of the national theatre, created a vast number of stage characters, greatly differing in style as well as in purpose and content, which will remain immortal achievements of Bulgarian culture. Having started his artistic career at the beginning of this century, together with the other three giants of the Bulgarian stage, Sarafov was one of the few among the early pioneers who lived to experience the popular victory of September 9, 1944, and the only one to throw a bridge between that brilliant generation of actors and the modern socialist theatre of Bulgaria, emerging as its foremost example.

Vassil Kirkov, Sava Ognyanov, Adriana Boudevska and, to cap them all, Krustyu Sarafov are the true creators of the Bulgarian theatre. Their achievements are a golden contribution of Bulgarian culture to the world's treasure store of culture. These three men and one woman were powerful talents, creative personalities with a vast erudition and a wide-awake civic conscience, actors with high aesthetic principles and big hearts, hearts that became one with the heart of the people. Thanks primarily to these four outstanding masters, brilliantly seconded by a whole galaxy of gifted actors and directors, the Bulgarian public, for centu-

ries cut off from the mainstream of world theatre art, was able to make up the lost ground, to understand and profoundly to love the outstanding classic and modern dramas, from Shakespeare to Ibsen and from Gogol to Gorky.

The creation and consolidation of the Bulgarian theatre was accompanied by the development of Bulgarian dramaturgy, whose foremost representatives were Ivan Vazov, Anton Strashimirov, P. K. Yavorov and P. Y. Todorov. Thus, within a mere twenty years after its foundation in 1904, the Bulgarian National Theatre imposed itself as a first-rate cultural institute.

But just as the Bulgarian theatre began to bear its ripest fruits, the monarcho-fascist regime destroyed its creative roots. In 1923, «to cleanse the atmosphere in the National Theatre», some of the best actors and actresses, including Vera Ignatieva, Ivan Popov and Vladimir Tenev, were summarily dismissed. Three years later, in 1926, «in the interest of the service», another order from high up deprived the Bulgarian stage of two of its giants — Vassil Kirkov and Adriana Boudevska. The insidious blow of the anti-popular regime had struck straight at the heart of the theatre. Pressure was put on the repertory policy: the government imposed a number of decadent modernistic and rabidly chauvinistic plays on the Bulgarian stage. However, despite these severe trials and tribulations, the National Theatre did not deviate basically from its traditional realistic line. In those troubled times the Russian theatre came once again to its rescue. In 1920 the Moscow Art Theatre had paid a visit to Bulgaria, producing a terrific impact on actors and public alike. Five years later, in 1925, N. O. Masalitinov, one of the M. A. T. actors, became chief director of the National Theatre. He succeeded in establishing a unified art policy and in creating a whole epoch in the nation's theatrical history. Bringing over to Bulgaria the aesthetic principles of the Moscow Art Theatre, Masalitinov, supported by the foremost Bulgarian actors, defended the realistic line of the National Theatre, and educated the new generation of actors who came to the fore in the '30s, forming them into a nucleus, which was gradually to take the place of the brilliant phalanx of the first professional Bulgarian

actors. It is this nucleus of Masalitinov pupils which is the present backbone of the Bulgarian theatre.

The monarcho-fascist repressions had their baneful repercussions on play-writing as well. The most valuable theatrical works produced during this period were the plays of Yordan Yovkov and S. L. Kostov; all the rest turned out to be stillborn literary or ephemeral scenic presentations, larded with chauvinistic and cheap boulevard elements. During the quarter-century from 1918 to 1944, the Bulgarian theatre lived under the constant threat of the monarcho-fascist sword of Damocles, fighting a stern uphill battle to preserve its realistic traditions against the powerful official current that would have led it into aesthetic distortion and other fascist overtones.

The September 9, 1944 victory opened up boundless vistas before the theatre, a perspective of all-round development and progress. Actively supported by the state, it could now unfold all its creative forces. New and inspiring tasks were set before it. A new audience began to fill the theatre halls: the poor and oppressed, the tormented and persecuted of yore, who now came here with the high feeling that they had become masters of their own destinies and who were determined to partake now of the best cultural fruits of life. The meeting of the theatre with its new public was a cordial one, for the Bulgarian theatre had always been genuinely democratic in its pith and marrow.

The Bulgarian actors actively supported the people's government with small travelling troupes, political representations, agitation, and recitals at public meetings in townships and rural areas, as well as with a number of stage settings which exuded the spirit of the new times.

Considerable attention was now devoted by the state to the theatre, which henceforth could count on ample subsidies and a maximum of other facilities. «We shall draw from our limited funds and resources, we shall use our far from boundless possibilities to the utmost, and we shall give and give, so that our theatre and opera may develop, as well as all that will serve to raise the culture of our people, of our youth, as a powerful factor for the edification of the new socialist society», said Georgi Dimitrov, the immor-

tal son of the Bulgarian nation, who was then its Prime Minister. This was the first time that a head of the Bulgarian state had found such warm words for the Bulgarian theatre.

The Bulgarian theatre took full advantage of these new opportunities. Whereas before 1944 there had been only 6 theatres in the whole country, now their number is 40. And each of these theatres can count on the support and love of the citizens and their government. Theatrical people are now held in high esteem. A number of them have been elected members of parliament, others councillors or heads of responsible state institutions. Many of them were awarded the Dimitrov Prize, 15 were proclaimed People's Artists and many more Artists of Merit.

As a result of this many-sided solicitude, continuing the realistic traditions of the stage, and fraternally aided by the great masters of the Soviet stage, the Bulgarian National Theatre represents today a radiant national centre of culture and a powerful art forum from which are spread the profoundly humanistic ideas of socialism.

A new pleiad of playwrights has come to the fore: Orlin Vassilev, Kamen Zidarov, Lozan Strelkov and others. Their works now figure in the Bulgarian theatre's repertory along with those of such Soviet writers as Simonov, Korneichuk, Lavrenev and others, as well as of Western playwrights like Arthur Miller, Eduardo di Filippo, Figueiredo and other contemporary dramatists. Of course, the classics are today more popular than ever before: Shakespeare and Gorky, Schiller and Tolstoy, Molière and Chekhov, Ibsen and Ostrovsky, Gogol and Bernard Shaw, Maupassant and Brecht.

The pillars of the Bulgarian theatre today are the People's Artists N. O. Masalitinov, Ivan Dimov, Georgi Stamatov, Vladimir Trendafilov, Konstantin Kissimov, Vladimir Tenev, Martha Popova, Zorka Yordanova, Peter Dimitrov, Tacho Tanev, Georgi Kostov and Nevyana Bouyuklieva, as well as many Artists of Merit and scores of promising young actors of the new stage generation. The hope of contemporary theatre art is, of course, the young shift of talented actors, graduates of the Krustyu Sarafov Theatre Art School in Sofia. This institution, founded in 1948, not only trains

new cadres for every theatre in the country, but also participates with its regular shows produced by its own students and in its own fine hall, a recent valuable addition to the cultural life of Sofia.

The Bulgarian national theatre has existed for a little over a century, closely attached to the most sacred thoughts, hopes and anxieties of the common people. Confidently maintaining its great democratic traditions, surrounded by the care of the people's government and the enthusiastic love of the public, the Bulgarian national theatre today educates people in a spirit of socialist morality and with the powerful artistic media of socialist stage realism takes a distinguished part in the edification of a new world.

*Bulgarian Art through the Ages.* Bulgarian art was created in a land rich in cultural monuments, which have come down to us from the most ancient times — the Stone and Bronze Ages, the days of antiquity and the Middle Ages. A number of Thracian tombs, among which that of Mazeik (4th century B. C.) and that of Kazanluk (end of 4th century B. C.), known for its remarkable early Greek frescos, date back to antiquity. The excavated towns Nicopolis ad Istrum (2nd to 4th centuries A. D.), Oescus (1st to 6th centuries A. D.) and Abritus (1st to 4th centuries A. D.), the tomb of Silistra (4th century) remarkable for its frescos and other monuments are witnesses of Roman domination in the Balkans. The Elena church near Pirdop (5th to 6th centuries A. D.), the St. Sophia church in Sofia and the Chervenova church near Peroushtitsa, all date back to the early Middle Ages. These monuments left by the Thracians, the Greeks and the Romans, had created real local traditions, which later had their influence over Bulgarian art. The old Bulgarians who came from the North in the 7th century and laid the foundations of the Bulgarian state, and the local Slav tribes who took part in the formation of this new state, also had their art traditions.

Ornamental and decorative, the art of the Slavs had great influence on the formation of Bulgarian art, especially folk art—fabrics and embroideries. Woodcarving and monumental wooden architecture are also old Slav traditions, while

the art traditions brought by the old Bulgarians from their ancient home at the north Black Sea coast were chiefly connected with the goldsmith's craft and tombstone and decorative sculpture.

The character of art during the first Bulgarian Kingdom was determined by the nature of the state organization — a strongly centralized power. The most characteristic feature of architecture and sculpture of that period was monumentality. The palaces in the old capital of Pliska and the other important buildings were all made of large stone blocks. The famous horseman of Madara, hewn high up in the rocks, a unique monument of its kind in Europe, is a symbol of the Khan's great power. The so-called Attila gold treasure found in Nagyszentmiklos is a remarkable Bulgarian monument of the end of the 9th century.

In 865 the Bulgarians accepted Christianity and their art assumed a religious and court aspect. Naturally it was under the influence of Byzantine art, then having its second revival. Soon, however, Preslav, the new capital of Bulgaria became the centre of an original Bulgarian art, different from that of the Byzantine Empire in many respects. The domeless three-nave church, which was no longer used in Constantinople, was predominant in Preslav. There existed various techniques, which appeared two centuries later in the Romanesque architecture. An original plan and rich sculptural and ceramic decoration were the distinctive features of the round church in Preslav.

Examples of painted and glazed ceramic decorations of that period have come down to us from a workshop which existed at the site of Patleina. Ornamental ceramic slabs for the facing of buildings and even drawings of human figures were made there. A portrait of St. Theodor, preserved in the Preslav museum, shows that some forms had been adopted from the Constantinople court art.

Following the old Bulgarian tradition sculpture also developed. It is a pre-Romanesque type of sculpture which is not met with in Byzantine art.

The peak of feudal art was reached in the days of Byzantine domination (1018-1185) and the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185-1396). The central power was weakened and the

growing influence of the individual feudal lords in its turn influenced art. Castles were built in naturally fortified places (Boyana, Pernik, Assenovgrad, Melnik, Babinité Vidini Kouli) and impregnable citadels were created such as Lovech, Cherven and the imposing capital of the Second Kingdom, Turnovo, which was situated on two hills surrounded almost entirely by the loops of the river Yantra. The churches of that period were smaller in size, but more richly decorated with frescos, ornaments and stone and brick masonry. The ossuary of the Bachkovo Monastery, dating back to the Byzantine domination (1083), the churches of Trapezitsa, the Assen district in Turnovo, Nessebur and Assenovgrad bear the characteristics of the old Bulgarian architectural style. The single-nave church was in common usage.

Wall painting developed especially in the 13th and 14th centuries. An original style of painting was created in the new capital; it became known as the Turnovo school of painting. The frescos of the Forty Martyrs Church in Turnovo (1230), the rupestral chapel in Gospodev Dol, near the village of Ivanovo and those of the Boyana Church (1259) are unique examples of this school of medieval classic works.

The famous wall paintings of Boyana are distinguished by their realism in a period when European art was still under the rigid canons of medievalism and Giotto, the forerunner of the West European Renaissance was not yet born.

A school of calligraphers and miniature painters also worked in Turnovo and decorated large and expensive bibles, psalm books and historical works. The Chronicle of Manasses (Vatican), the «Curzon Bible» (British Museum), the Elissavetgrad Bible (Kuibishev), the Moscow Psalm Book (Historical Museum, Moscow) have come down to us from that day.

There was also a school of art ceramics in Turnovo; the works it produced were distinguished from those of the Preslav school by being first engraved and then painted. The goldsmiths' crafts were also developed. Enamelled crosses, gold enamelled medallions, silver vessels, decorated with animal motifs, ear-rings, rings and bracelets were made in the numerous craft shops.



During the first years of the Ottoman domination of 1393-1878 every constructive activity had stopped and the old monuments had been destroyed. At the end of the 15th century, small single-nave churches of simple architecture began to be built in the remote towns and villages and in the monasteries. No public or private buildings have come down to us from the first centuries of Ottoman bondage. The houses preserved in the village of Arbanassi near Turnovo from the 17th and the 18th centuries give us an idea of how private houses looked in those days.

There was no more marked change in the field of painting than in that of architecture. Paintings became more schematic, but never departed from the traditions of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom and from real life.

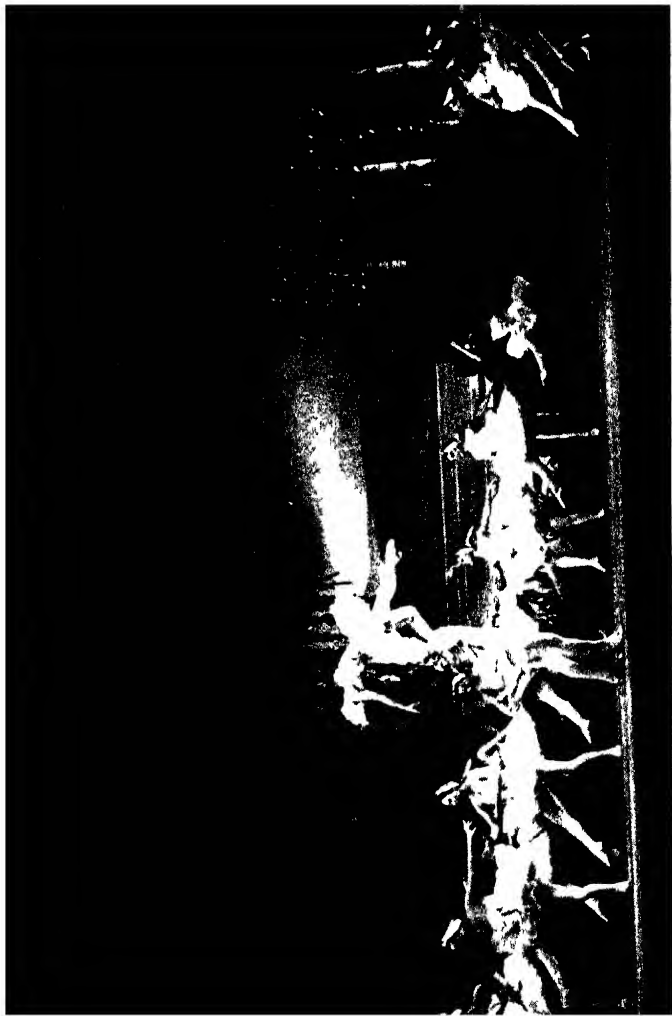
During the period of the Bulgarian Revival, when conditions for the emergence of a new class, the bourgeoisie, were at hand, the whole world outlook of the Bulgarian nation changed radically. Two basic ideas determined the further development of Bulgarian art. One of the ideas was that the Bulgarian people were a nation too and were entitled to freedom, and the other was the destruction of the mystical religious ideas of the Middle Ages and the approach of man to real life. Mysticism gave way to the joy of life. Religious ideas were replaced by humanitarian ones. Reason and science won the upper hand over parables and legends.

These two ideas permeated every sphere of art. During the Revival, Bulgarian architecture gradually assumed the forms and technical methods of monumental architecture. The clock towers which rose in the craft centres of Berkovitsa, Razgrad, Tryavna, and Plovdiv were among the first examples of this new architecture. Churches were no longer built underground, brick walls replaced the wooden ones, domes began to appear gradually and the churches became lighter; high steeples were also built. Some remarkably beautiful monasteries were built and renovated, among which the Rila Monastery holds pride of place.

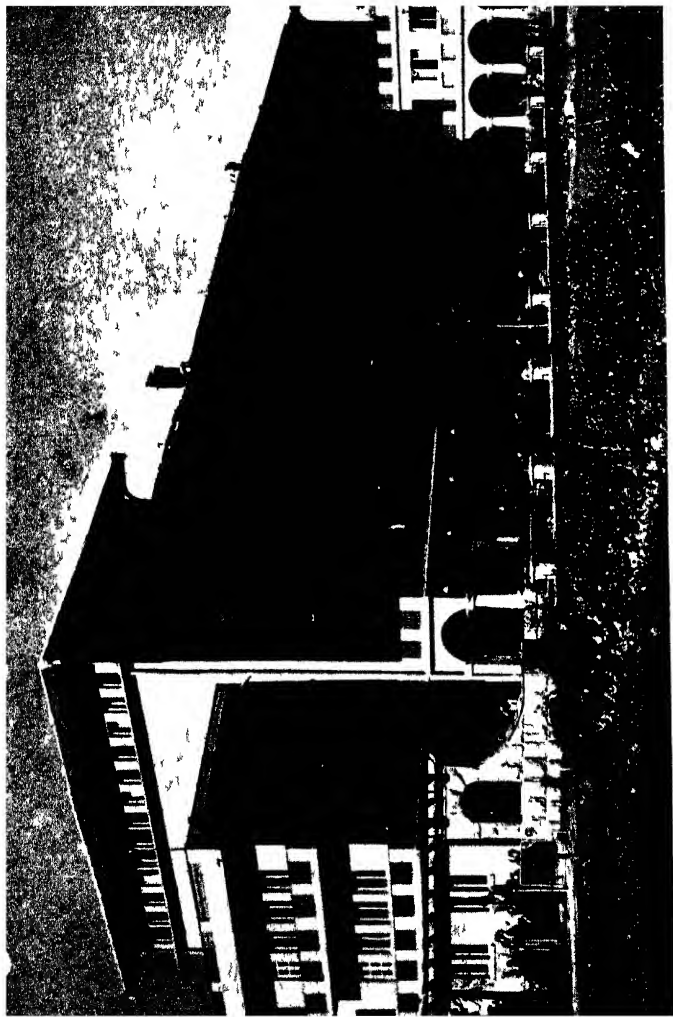
The appearance of private houses also changed. Large windows gave onto the street, the rooms were arranged around a large hall, the walls and pediments were painted in bright coloured frescos and the ceilings were masterworks of wood-



*The National Theatre in Sofia*



*Scene from the ballet Swan Lake, produced at the Sofia National Opera*



*The new rest home for co-operative farmers in Kyustendil*



*Winter in Rila Mountain*

carving. Many of these quaint towns created during the Revival, such as Koprivshtitsa, Tryavna, Elena, Zheravna, Kotel, Raikovo, Bansko, Turnovo, and the old Plovdiv have been preserved until today. During the same period several architectural schools were created under their remarkable masters. Dimiter Kazoolou was the founder of the Peshtera School and Nikola Fichev (1800-1887) of the Turnovo School.

Radical changes took place in icon painting too. Saints no longer had the faces of hermits, but of normal human beings; landscapes and scenes from the life of the craftsmen appeared in the background. The choice of the particular saints shows an attempt to exercise a patriotic influence over the people — the portraits of Bulgarian and Slav saints predominate. The painting of church donors in national costumes is very widely practiced. The Tryavna, Aton, Samokov and Bansko schools of icon painting were the most important ones at the time. The Samokov school, founded by Hristo Dimitrov, who had studied in Vienna, trained the finest artists of the period. Dimitrov's son Zahari Zograf (1810-1853) was a real revolutionary in his art. He became the founder of Bulgarian secular art. Stanislav Dospevski (1823-1877), Hristo Tsokev (1797-1883) who studied in Russia and Nikolai Pavlovich (1835-1894) who studied in Vienna and Munich, are outstanding artists of our Revival, who painted fine portraits and various subjects taken from life and made lithographs.

Engravings, which followed the traditions of the old Bulgarian miniatures, also appeared during the Revival. At the beginning they were only decorative elements in books and were later used to illustrate the text. Early in the 19th century separate engravings began appearing, as well as engravings devoted to religious subjects.

Samokov was the centre of graphic art in the first half of the 19th century, where Nikola Karastoyanov (1778-1874) opened the first engravers' school. In the field of lithography Hrnich Dembitski (1823-1906) worked on themes taken from the revolutionary struggles.

There was a great flowering of decorative art during the Revival. Design was freed from medieval ornamentation — arabesques and intertwined patterns.

Woodcarving was especially widespread. Some exquisite examples have come down to us from the Tryavna, Debur and Samokov schools. Stone sculpture also developed. Realistic ornaments were also applied in the goldsmith's craft, copper work and jewelry made of mother of pearl. Carpet-weaving and embroidery also followed the general pattern of Bulgarian art during the Revival. Folk potters appeared, and entire centres like Troyan sprang up, where the craft was greatly developed.

After Bulgaria's national liberation by the Russian people in 1878 up to the end of World War II a new impetus was given to the development of architecture. In the first years many foreign architects worked in Bulgaria and brought with them West European influences. The building of the National Assembly, the Palace, the Military Club, the National Theatre and the Sofia University were built by these foreign architects. The Russian architect Professor D. Pomerantsev built the Alexander Nevsky Church Memorial in Sofia and the church at the Shipka Monastery. Later the first Bulgarian architects, who had studied abroad, launched a movement to make use of the Bulgarian architectural heritage, but the political and social conditions of the time were not conducive to any important results. The influence of constructivism assumed great proportions in Bulgaria after World War I. Co-operative housing blocks appeared in Sofia and the contradictions between building in the centre and at the periphery, between town and country were enhanced. Some buildings of that period, however, show very sound trends in the field of architecture. Such are the Palace of Justice, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and National Defence, the Bulgaria Concert Hall, some schools, hospitals, villas and other buildings.

Shortly after Bulgaria's liberation, various foreign artists worked in other fields of Bulgarian art. Some of them were closely connected with the development of Bulgarian culture and actually became Bulgarian artists. Thus for instance the Czechs Ivan Mrkvicka (1856-1938) and Jaroslav Vesin (1869-1915) are among the founders of Bulgaria's modern art. They worked together with the Bulgarians Anton Mitov (1856-1938) and Ivan Angelov (1864-1924). National

democratic tendencies appeared also in the work of the first Bulgarian sculptors, most important among whom is Zheko Spiridonov (1864-1944). A host of talented artists were working at the turn of the century: the portrait painters Nikola Mihailov (1876), Tseno Todorov (1877-1953), Stefan Ivanov (1875-1951), Nikola Marinov (1879-1948), the landscape painters Nikola Petrov (1881-1916), Boris Denev (1883), Nikola Tanev (1890), Atanas Mihov (1880), Alexander Moutafov (1879-1957). At the same time the first works of critical realism appeared and were further developed by Hristo Stanchev (1870-1950). In the field of sculpture Andrei Nikolov (1878) came to the fore as a master of the marble figure. Alexander Bozhinov (1878), the doyen of the modern cartoon, is the most outstanding representative of Bulgarian modern graphic art.

After World War I the class polarization in the country had its reflection on the development of art as well. In some cases formalism had some influence over artists with progressive leanings and participants in the workers' movement, but most of them remained together with their people. Some of them sought inspiration in the old traditions and customs, such as Ivan Milev (1897-1927); in the old Bulgarian monuments, as Tsanko Lavrenov (1896); or in social problems, as Pencho Georgiev (1898-1938). The most outstanding representative in this field is Vassil Zahariev (1895), who is the founder of the modern Bulgarian engraving. In sculpture Ivan Lazarov (1890-1952) created a number of characteristic compositions and portraits of Bulgarian women and enlighteners of the Revival period. The work of these artists shows many original features. The work of Vladimir Dimitrov-the Master, who lives in the country and paints Bulgarian women and girls among flowers and fruit, is also very original. Vassil Stoilov (1904) has also painted fine portraits of peasant men and women.

There are other artists who draw inspiration from the people, but are more closely linked with modern life. Many of them were seized by the ideas of the Great October Revolution, at which time the political theme came to the fore and revolutionary graphic works appeared on the pages of many progressive newspapers and magazines.



Outstanding representatives of this genre are Alexander Zhendov (1902-1953), Stoyan Venev (1904) who is also a painter. Iliya Beshkov (1901-1958), a past master of drawing and illustration, also developed as an artist under the influence of progressive ideas, and so did Veselin Staikov (1906) who has made exquisite engravings of Bulgarian towns, and scenes from the life of the working people. Portraits of workers also appeared in the paintings of Nenko Balkanski (1907) and the remarkable sculptures of Ivan Founev (1900). Boris Angeloushev (1902) is a great master of the illustration and has done a great deal for the improvement of the modern Bulgarian book.

A number of other talented artists came to the fore in the thirties. Many of them are still working, and together with some of the older masters, are the pillars of contemporary Bulgarian art. Dechko Ousounov (1899) is a master of the portrait, landscape paintings and decorative sketches; Iliya Petrov (1903) has created, in recent years, the most important works in the field of large compositions. Creator of revolutionary engravings in the thirties, he is now one of the masters of modern Bulgarian illustration. Other important artists are Panayot Panayotov (1912), Boyan Petrov (1902) and Georgi Popov (1906). Outstanding landscape painters are Danail Dechev (1903), Ivan Hristov (1906), as well as Zdravko Alexandrov (1911), Vassil Barakov (1902) and others. Naiden Petkov (1918), Nikola Mirchev (1921), Kocho Denchev (1920), Sergei Ivailov (1923) are among the most promising artists of the younger generation.

Aside from Founev, the older generation of sculptors includes Marko Markov (1889), a master of the portrait, Lyubomir Dalchev (1902), author of remarkable large compositions, Vaska Emanouilova (1905), Mara Georgieva (1905) and Vassil Radoslavov (1908). Among the younger generation are Vladimir Ginovski (1927), Sekoul Kroumov (1922), Nikola Terziev (1927), Georgi Apostolov (1921) and others.

Graphic art has made great headway since World War II. The '40s, charged with revolutionary fervour, produced many artists of remarkable political posters and cartoons. Among them are Alexander Poplilov (1916), Karandash (1924), Todor Dinov (1919), Marko Behar (1914),

Radoslav Marinov (1926) and others. Together with the development of the engraving — Sedonia Atanassova (1909), Pavel Vulkov (1908-1956), Dimitar Draganov (1908), Evtim Tomov (1919), Elka Zaharieva (1927) and others --- there are also outstanding young masters in the field of the drawing and illustration --- Georgi Daskalov (1923), Lyuben Zidarov (1923) Stoyan Anastassov (1923), Hristo Neikov (1929), Mana Parpoulova (1925) and others. Neva Touzssouzova (1908) works in the sphere of children's illustrations and designs of folk costumes. Conditions are being created for the development of stage and cinema décor and in the various fields of decorative art.

After World War II great opportunities were opened up for the development of architecture. In its effort to create the material basis for the socialist reconstruction of the country, it makes use of the newest achievements of modern technique, trying to adopt a national form without too much conventionality of line.

Bulgarian art is developing in all its aspects and is drawing ever closer to the people, ready to serve them and satisfy their aesthetic needs in the best possible way.

*The Cinema.* The birthday of the Bulgarian cinema, properly speaking, may be said to be September 9, 1944, when it developed into a medium of modern art under the conditions of a popular democratic government. Within a short time it became an enterprise of a socialist type, with a modern technique, with a staff of trained specialists — engineers, cameramen, artists, scenarists and directors. Most of the creative cadres received their education in the higher educational establishments of the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia on a scholarship basis. The rapid pace at which the Bulgarian film industry developed is a telling example of the general cultural upsurge in the country.

At the beginning of 1944 Bulgaria had 213 cinemas, two-thirds of which were concentrated in the towns and only one third in the villages. Today there are 1,198 cinemas, an almost six-fold increase. What is even more striking is that in the countryside the increase is almost 13-fold. The

annual rate of increase in the number of cinemas has jumped from a mere nine in the prewar years to the present 100.

The repertory policy of the films projected has undergone a radical change. The films shown today to the Bulgarian public are primarily films with progressive themes, films of high educational value, which instil lofty, moral and humane ideals, ideals of peace and international understanding.

Film production is making rapid headway. One of the main factors responsible for this progress was the adoption of the creative method of socialist realism and the drawing on the rich experience and achievements of Soviet film art. These factors protected the young and inexperienced Bulgarian film workers from errors and shortened their period of vacillation. What is more, thanks to the most active collaboration with the nation's outstanding writers, musicians and artists, the cinema established intimate contacts with the other branches of art, which can look back on older traditions and have more experience.

Today four different film studios — for feature films, for newsreels and documentaries, for popular science films, for cartoons — are working under the direction of a special administrative sector at the Ministry of Culture and Education. In 1960 the modernly equipped film centre, situated at the foot of the beautiful Mt. Vitosha, is expected to be ready.

The Bulgarian cinema is a significant cultural fact, with its own national physiognomy, its own laboriously won positions, its own achievements and its trained and talented cadres. The total annual production of the four studios amounts already to 200 films, many of which are in colours. Of late serious attempts have been made to master all the possibilities of the wide screen, the cinemascope, the cinerama and the other novelties in this field.

The salient characteristic of the Bulgarian cinema is its striving to reflect the modern outlook, one which seeks active contact with the problems of life today.

The weekly newsreels as well as the documentary films are distinguished by an immediacy of reaction to current events and problems, by a passionate journalistic spirit,

All these films are an inspired chronicle of the heroic road towards the new, of the stormy events, large-scale achievement and rapid development, the characteristics of socialist construction.

The film studios can look with pride upon the success abroad of their short biographical sketches of the poets Hristo Botev, Geo Milev and Nikola Vaptsarov.

The interest in diversity of genres is expressed in the studios' attempts to treat all kinds of themes, ranging from sports to children's interests, from satire to news about our cultural life and the portrayal of our beautiful land.

The productions of the Popular Science Film Studio, which is rapidly becoming an original and popular film university, also bear the imprint of modernity. Here too there is a great variety of themes and genres — scholastic, panoramic, instructive, educational, essays on our cultural heritage, and so forth. The main emphasis, however, is placed on films popularizing the achievements of science and technology, films which are aimed at helping industry, agriculture and the educational establishments. Most of these propagate new methods of production, and spread the «know-how» of front-rankers and rationalizers. There is also considerable interest in films dedicated to the cultural heritage, the natural scenery and the subsoil wealth of our country.

The productions of the Popular Science Film Studio are greatly appreciated abroad. It is therefore no accident that this studio should have been the one to win the greatest number of prizes in international contests. Already in 1948, at the Venice Film Festival, Zahari Zhandov's «Men Above the Clouds» was awarded the first prize. At about the same time «The Long Path of the Cigarette» won a second prize at the Marianske Lazne Film Festival.

In 1957 the film «Pirin Mountains» won the third prize at the Trento Mountain Film Festival in Italy. «Our Serpents» and «The Protective Resources of Animals» won high recognition at the international review of special films in Rome, while the collection of Bulgarian popular science films received a cup and a diploma for the most successful selection of films shown.

The great interest shown by the public in Western Europe in the art research film «Boyana Church» is also most gratifying. This film, which shows the wonderful 13th-century frescos in a little church near Sofia, was awarded the Grand Prix at the Brussels Film Festival in 1957.

The most important yardstick, however, of the general progress made by a nation's cinema is the extent to which the dramaturgy and media of expression of the feature film have been mastered. It was only in 1950 that the Bulgarian state-owned cinema released its first full-length film, «Kalin the Eagle». Eight years is much too short a period for an art to develop a national physiognomy of its own.

With this very first production, the Bulgarian state-owned cinema adopted a socialist approach towards the problems of life. The salient feature of the early period is the bold attempt on the part of the film workers to tackle complex situations. The first films -- «Alarm», «Under the Yoke», «The Septembrists», «Men of Dimitrovgrad», «Cruiser Nadezhda» and «A Song of Man» — are all built up on multiple themes.

The first Bulgarian film with a contemporary theme was «Morrow over the Homeland», about the youth brigade movement, which was directed by A. Marinovich after a scenario by K. Kalchev. Another Marinovich film is «Adam's Rib», based on a scenario by A. Vagenshtine. This film tells about the life and fate of Zyulker, a poor Bulgarian Moslem girl, who emerges from the darkness of medieval prejudices into the light of socialism. The first film comedies «It Happened on the Street», directed by Y. Yankov, and «Two Victories», directed by B. Sharialiev, are distinguished by considerable spontaneity and an optimism that is infectious. «The First Question on the Agenda», based on a scenario by V. Petrov and directed by Boyan Danovski, is imbued with humaneness and anxiety.

In their attempt to master the contemporary theme our young film workers are turning towards greater diversity of genres and styles. Peter Borisov shot the first youth film of adventure, «The Traces Remain». N. Korabov and D. Moundrov created a film narrative about the young builders of socialism «Men of Dimitrovgrad», while Volodya

Yanchev produced an entertaining comedy on a sports theme, «Favourite No 13».

The most significant achievements of the Bulgarian cinema, however, are the films showing the socialist transformation of the countryside, «Restless Road» and «The Law Forbids», directed by D. Dakovski after scenarios by S. T. Daskalov.

Of great value to Bulgarian film workers were the joint productions with Lenfilm and Mosfilm: «The Heroes of Shipka», directed by S. Vassilev and revealing an epic page from the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78 which brought liberation to Bulgaria; «A Lesson of History», directed by O. Arnshtam, a film about Georgi Dimitrov's immortal exploit at the historic Reichstag Fire Trial; and the screen adaptation of Turgenev's novel «On the Eve», directed by V. Petrov.

There were also a couple of most profitable joint productions with the Czech and German film workers: «A Legend of Love», based on a play of Nazim Hikmet and directed by Vatzslav Krushka, and «Stars», based on a scenario by A. Vagenshtine and directed by Konrad Wolf.

The results obtained so far by the young Bulgarian film industry are most promising. A number of distinguished film workers have come to the fore, laureates of national and international prizes: the directors Zahari Zhandov, Dako Dakovski, Borislav Sharaliev; the cameramen Boncho Karastoyanov, Vassil Holiolchev, Emil Rashev and Vulo Radev; the scenarists Orlin Vassilev, V. Petrov, and many others. The list of film actors who have won great popularity includes Ivan Dimov, Apostol Karamitev, Milka Touikova and Sasha Krousharska.

The Bulgarian film workers have recovered from their growing pains and are on the threshold of their creative maturity. Their eyes are turned on more significant themes and subjects, on new media of expression, on films reflecting the thoughts and aspirations of the working people, on productions which are deeply human and are imbued with the heroism of our great epoch.

*Bulgarian Folk Art.* Bulgarian folk art is the fruit of many centuries. In origin it is linked with Slav culture.

In the lengthy period of its development it has been influenced by the numerous peoples with whom the Bulgarians came in contact during their cultural and historical development. However, both the Slav heritage and foreign influences have been independently and creatively developed, so that Bulgarian folk art has acquired its own independent character.

Folk art is largely of the nature of applied art, and has penetrated into the home, influencing clothing, household furnishings and utensils, the implements used in work, craftsmen's instruments, etc. One of its most characteristic features is the skilled and purposeful use of the raw materials for practical ends, simultaneously satisfying the demands of aesthetics. The carver, the potter and the coppersmith knew how to mould vessels of convenient form and exquisite line out of a piece of wood, a ball of clay or a bit of metal; while the embroideress was skilled in turning the rough hempen fabric into the kind of garment which the people dreamt of and described in their folk stories and songs. Purity and simplicity of line, as well as plasticity of form, are characteristics of Bulgarian folk art, and so are vivid and full-blooded drawing, marked rhythm in arranging the individual elements of a composition, rich colour schemes, and the pleasantly harmonious combinations of colours. The freshness, vitality and brightness so typical of Bulgarian folk art are due to its sound ties with the world of reality. In subject matter it is linked with the surroundings of the master craftsmen. Created in close proximity to nature, it mirrors the familiar flora and fauna in their natural forms and colours. These craftsmen often took household vessels and implements as models for their designs, and sometimes human figures and genre pictures.

The textiles produced by the people — fabrics, embroideries and lace — have a particularly strongly marked national originality. Bulgarian women make with equal skill thick woollen fabrics, sometimes of goats' hair, and fine, transparent silk fabrics; they make smooth fabrics of one or many colours, and others ornamented in different ways; by combining their materials and with original techniques, they make their fabrics supple, waterproof and warm,

according to their wish. Usually their fabrics have a smooth surface, and are the natural colour of the material used in making them; but the national character of Bulgarian textiles is determined by the coloured and ornamented fabrics, which are usually striped along the warp, more rarely in separate parts of the fabric, and, more recently, checked or plaid. The highest achievements of the art of weaving in Bulgaria are the ornamented fabrics, along the warp of which there are multicoloured ornaments, together with the stripes; they are placed in a markedly rhythmic way either at a distance from each other or linked in a chain; these ornaments are sometimes woven in thicker threads than the rest of the fabric, which gives them a slight relief. The beauty of these fabrics is largely due to the many colours harmoniously blended in them. The fabrics of the Dobroudja and Thrace, for instance, seem to have gathered within them all the brilliant colours of the plains in which they were made, while those of the Rhodopes and other mountains blend the brilliance of sunlight with the contrasting rich dark colours of the dense forests which cover them. These are the fabrics used in making the national costumes worn in the country. They are also used in furnishing the Bulgarian house. The lovely striped rugs on the floor, the brilliantly coloured cushions on the window seats, the bedspreads, the soft, warm and fluffy tufted blankets and rugs, and the goats' hair rugs, also thrown over the minderi, or seats, placed around the walls of a room, make the home particularly cosy and attractive.

Rugs are the pride of the Bulgarian art of weaving. The rugs traditionally made in Bulgaria are mostly smooth, and have no wrong side; they are generally made of wool. The good quality of the materials used in making them, the smooth and thick texture, the beauty of design and pleasant colours, as well as the care with which they are made have won an excellent name for Bulgarian rugs both at home and abroad. Several centuries ago the home production of rugs in Bulgaria turned into an art craft, with two main production centres, Chiprovtsi and Kotel.

The creative force of the Bulgarian folk artist is markedly apparent in the embroideries. The typical features of this



craft are the extreme variety of design, the supple line in drawing, even in the geometrical designs, the clear fresh colours, the festive brilliance of design. There are countless varieties of Bulgarian embroideries, mostly regional in character, but sometimes even varying from one neighbouring village to another.

In knitting and crochet work it is the laces sewn to the sleeves of women's smocks or their headkerchiefs which deserve special mention. They are worked in silk in exquisitely fine small patterns. They are found chiefly in the Sredna Gora region, the mountain range which runs parallel to the Balkan Range, to the south of the latter.

Although the geographical conditions and the work the people engage in have influenced their garb, Bulgarian folk costumes widely reflect the aesthetic taste and creative talent of the people. Handwoven fabrics with a smooth surface, multicoloured or ornamented, are the principal materials of which the garments worn by Bulgarians are made. The costumes are made up of many different garments, but all their parts form a harmonious whole.

Women's national costumes fall into four groups: the first is the two-apron group (widespread in North Bulgaria) the main part of which is a long smock, with an apron worn in front, and a second apron or kilted skirt at the back. The soukman costume is worn mainly in the mountainous regions; the soukman, a fairly long black or dark blue woollen sleeveless or short-sleeved garment is worn over the smock. The saya costume is worn in South-West Bulgaria, the saya being an outer garment open down the front and worn with the fronts overlapping; sayas are made of striped or plain-coloured material, white, blue or green. The final group is of single-aproned costumes, in which a very wide apron, covering almost the entire lower part of the body, is worn over the smock as an outer garment; this is found in the Rhodopes.

The men's national costumes are divided into two groups: the so-called white and black clothes. The former are worn in North and West Bulgaria, and are made of white woollen fabric; the latter are worn in South and East Bulgaria, and are made of woollen fabric in the natural coloured wool of

the brown sheep found in the country or of woollen material dyed black or blue.

The Bulgarian's taste is manifested both in his house and in the picturesqueness of the villages, which are built mainly in the folds of mountains, along the banks of rivers and in the plains. They are always well-wooded, many fruit trees being planted in the yards of the houses. The interiors are attractive and cosy, having an open fireplace or hearth, gaily coloured striped handwoven rugs on the floor, carved ceilings, with floors and façades also occasionally ornamented with carving. There is usually a seat, running around the interior wall, known as the *minder*, and this has cushions against the wall, and is covered with a strip of handwoven woollen or cotton material. Both cushions and cover are a riot of beautifully harmonized and contrasting colours in a great variety of designs. A painted chest, shelves on which gaily-coloured earthenware dishes and pots, and tinned copper dishes and water jars are arranged, complete the picture.

Woodcarving is an art which is practiced on a nation-wide scale. Mountain shepherds are the most skilled in artistically working wood; their carving, which is mainly flat, ornaments their crooks, sticks, and cups, as well as the spinning and weaving implements they make for the womenfolk - distaffs and shuttles, as well as the cowl-staffs used to carry the water jars. Carving in relief was used mainly to ornament houses and public buildings, such as churches and so on. The art of carving flowered and reached its zenith in the days of the Bulgarian Revival, i. e. in the 19th century. The Bulgarian folk carvers belonged to three main schools, which were formed purely locally and on their own initiative — the schools of Samokov, Bansko and Tryavna. Each school strove to achieve perfection of form and ornament, and worked out a style of its own, irrepeatably in the history of the decorative art of carving. The houses of Koprivshtitsa, Kotel, Zheravna, Bansko and Samokov are perfect treasure-houses of the folk art of carving, with their ceilings, doors, closets and chests, and so are the numerous monasteries and churches, chiefly the Rila Monastery, certain churches in Bansko, Plovdiv, Pazardjik and elsewhere, with their wonderful iconostases.

Dishes and pots, the vessels used to preserve fruit and vegetables, and water jars, are the fundamental and traditional forms of Bulgarian ceramics. Their characteristics are pure simplicity of line and the designs used to ornament them consist mainly of straight or wavy lines all round them. At the beginning of the 19th century, plant designs were first introduced into the patterns, and the use of such designs spread rapidly.

The typical features of copper vessels (dishes, trays and round baking pans, wine and brandy flasks) are engraved designs of plant (and more rarely, animal) ornaments, cast figures in slight relief, or filigree stands. Dogs for fireplaces, and candlesticks in the form of animals (usually horses, bears or birds) are the most frequent objects made of wrought iron.

The metal jewelry worn with the folk costumes shows the great skill of the Bulgarian goldsmiths. Made of different metals, most frequently of silver alloy, greatly varied in technique – cast, wrought, made of filigree, ornamented with engravings or enamelled and chiselled – massive or made of separate parts and chains, the metal jewelry is distinguished by its beauty and exquisite craftsmanship. The filigree work is of particular beauty, and here the goldsmiths have turned the fine metal wire into rosettes with many leaves, barely opened buds, figures of birds and so on.

Decorative painting, in the form of frescos in the churches and monasteries has been well represented in the country from a very early date. This branch of folk art did not develop extensively because of the long centuries of Ottoman bondage. It is found chiefly in the form of decorations on the façades of houses, paintings on household vessels and chests, etc. The typical features of Bulgarian folk decorative painting are a supple and playful line and fresh colours.

The ritual loaves, made on various festive occasions, and ornamented with a great variety of figures in relief on their tops, give expression to the sculptural talents of Bulgarian women; some of them amaze one with their exquisite lines.

The objects made by Bulgarian folk artists are a rich and varied cultural heritage of the past, and act as an inexhaustible stimulus and inspiration for artists, as well as providing

models which are creatively worked out and introduced into present-day decorative arts and crafts and into industry, much being thus done to help preserve and develop the national form of contemporary Bulgarian culture.

The original culture, intimate experience and longing for a free and happy life of the Bulgarians has found expression in their songs and dances.

Bulgarian folk songs fall into different groups: those concerned with daily life and work, those on historical subjects, haidouk songs, partisan songs, humorous songs and so on. But it is difficult to draw any definite line between these groups. They intermingle and overlap, and influence each other as well.

There is a very large body of songs about haidouks and other heroes, and about historical events; in them the bravery of the haidouks, their sympathy for the poor, their hatred and contempt of the Ottoman oppressors and the chorbadjis (the rich masters) are all expressed.

In more recent times the people have created songs against war, about the Uprising of September, 1923, and in the last score of years about the Bulgarian Communist Party's struggles, and partisan folksongs.

Bulgarian folk dances are unusually original.

They are danced at fairs and working parties, at weddings, on holidays and special occasions. People of all ages join in them — children, young girls, young men, elderly men and women and the old folk too. They are usually chain or round dances.

The Ruchenitsa has become known abroad as a Bulgarian folk dance. In this dance the solos are danced by highly skilled dancers, who perform with skill and grace. When two soloists take part in a Ruchenitsa, the dance takes on something of the nature of a competition.

Bulgarian folk dances are rich in movement and content. The movements are mostly concentrated in the legs, but the head and arms, and sometimes even the whole body, play a part in them.

Bulgarians dance impetuously and temperamentally. Their dances reflect their working life. This is evident from the names of the dances «Kopanitsa» («Digging Dance»), «Konskata» («Horses' Dance»), «Master Manol» and so on.

In the Dobroudjan and Thracian Ruchenitsas some of the movements of hands and arms recall the kneading of dough, and the swaying of ripe ears of wheat.

Special care is lavished on folk art today on preserving it and developing it. The people's wonderful traditions in singing and dancing have been taken over by the thousands of amateur groups in town and countryside.

The State Folk Song and Dance Company, founded in 1950, has as its aim the preservation and creative development of the wealth of folksongs and dances.

Its achievements have been highly appreciated by Bulgarian audiences, as well as by those beyond the boundaries of the country.

*Sports.* In prewar days sports in Bulgaria were still restricted to members of the leisured class. They alone could afford to build and maintain playgrounds, tennis courts, swimming pools and artificial lakes, to which the masses had no access. The lack of sports equipment, the complete indifference of the state, which allocated no funds for such purposes, and the poverty of the people determined the character of Bulgarian sports. As only a small section of the population could engage in sports, the general standards and the national records were more than modest.

Today Bulgaria has taken its proper place in the world of sports. Bulgarian sports clubs and individual sportsmen participate in practically all the international and world championships. Ever more frequently the Bulgarian national anthem resounds at international sports events, festivals and championships. Scores of Bulgarian sportsmen have already won gold, silver and bronze medals at the Olympics and at major international contests. There is no more eloquent proof of the tremendous advance in sporting achievements made by this country during the past fifteen years than the fact that today Bulgaria ranks among the top ten nations in the world in such popular sports as basketball,

volleyball, weight-lifting, wrestling, parachute jumping, equestrianism and chess.

How was it possible for Bulgarian sports to make so striking a progress in so short a time?

Already in the very first days after the establishment of a People's Democracy the new government set down in its programmatic declaration that sports would henceforth develop on scientific foundations, become a mass movement and enjoy the full material and moral support of the state. This was a great day for Bulgarian sports, their real birth-date. Broad vistas opened out, with unlimited opportunities. A large number of clubs sprang up in factories, schools and professional organizations. In the army too sports were promoted on an all-round basis. For the first time in the nation's history sports were introduced into the villages, where the unified Ouzozhai sports organization was created. In 1948 the National Assembly passed a Law on Physical Culture and Sports, ensuring even more favourable conditions for the development and mass extension of sports as well as for the rapid raising of sports mastery. Radical changes were introduced in the organization and management of sports, a number of training schools for coaches were opened, the Higher Institute for Physical Culture and Sports was founded, sports construction was launched on a broad scale. Every year considerable funds were set aside in the budget for the promotion of sports. In addition, special funds set aside by the trade unions, by factories and enterprises, and more recently by the profits from the new state sports «pools», secured a sound base for sports construction. In 1957 Bulgaria could already boast of 54 modern stadiums, as against fewer than 10 in prewar days. A leap occurred in 1958, when no less than 137 new stadiums were added, most of them quite modern, with football grounds and athletic tracks. In addition, 134 swimming pools, thousands of basketball and volleyball courts, hundreds of gymnastic halls, artificial lakes, tourist lodges, alpine chalets and refuges, sailing boat bases, athletic tracks, concrete bicycle tracks, etc. sprang up during the past decade or so. The largest sports complex is the Vassil Levski Stadium in Sofia, with a seating capacity of over 50,000.

Today Bulgarian sports have a sound material base, which is at the disposal of the hundreds of thousands of organized sportsmen in town and village. Thanks to the all-round support of the state and to correct management and organization, sports have now assumed mass proportions in Bulgaria. At the end of 1958 there were over 9,000 sports clubs, with a total membership of about 1 million men and women.

The sports life of the nation functions in the system of national championships, in which all the clubs take part. These begin at the base, continue on an urban and district scale, and wind up with the national contests, in which the best clubs and individuals participate.

The traditional domestic and international sports contests within the country greatly contribute to the popularization of sports. This is particularly true of the Soviet Army Cup football competition, which is held annually on a nationwide scale and in which some 6,000 football clubs took part in 1958; and of the Strandja Cup (boxing) and Sofia Cup (basketball) competitions, to which every year the strongest European clubs are invited, and others.

The annual Spartacus Games provide a powerful stimulus to sports. In these traditional sports contests a large number of sportsmen, both club members and non-organized, take part. Thus, for instance, in the first stage of the 1958 Spartacus Games (the second stage is carried out in spring 1959) over 1,800,000 sportsmen took part.

The new organization of sports life has created the basis for a sharp improvement of the competitive standards and has raised the prestige of Bulgaria in the world of sports. Every year many new records are established. In 1957 alone no fewer than 143 national records were broken in athletics, swimming, weight-lifting, cycling and other sports.

Bulgaria has won international recognition in such sports as football, basketball, volleyball, cycling, parachutism, equestrianism, chess etc. Its soaring international prestige in sports is testified to by the ever more frequent sessions of world and Olympic organizations in Sofia. Another high testimony to Bulgarian sports is embodied in the decision to include international matches organized in this country as valid for European and world championships. One of the

most interesting international sports events in which Bulgaria has been participating of late is the Balkan Games. In 1958 it was held in Sofia and ended in a sensational victory of the Bulgarian athletes, ahead of such strong sporting nations as Yugoslavia, Rumania, Greece and Turkey.

Ever more frequently foreign clubs and teams and individual sportsmen visit Bulgaria to vie with Bulgarian wrestlers, boxers, cyclists, motorists, chess players, basketball and volleyball teams, etc. At the same time, Bulgarian clubs and teams appear abroad on an increasing scale.

Bulgaria has produced a number of distinguished sportsmen, whose exploits have won international recognition. Among these are the wrestler Petko Sirakov, world champion; the cyclist Nencho Hristov, twice winner of the Tour of Egypt and winner of the biggest amateur cycling race, the Warsaw-Berlin-Prague Peace Race, in 1957; the boxer Dimitar Velinov, European champion; the skier Georgi Dimitrov, who has won numerous international contests; the weight-lifter Ivan Vesselinov; the athletes Artarski (discus and shot put), Kolev, Buchvarov and Kolarova (sprinters), Gourgoushinov (hop, step and jump) and Slavkov (decathlon and broad jump); the international chess master Oleg Neikirch; the parachutist Stefan Kalupchiev — world champion who jumped 45,335 feet (instantaneous opening); the wrestler Nikola Stanchev, Olympic champion; and many more. Particularly successful in competitive sports were the national men's teams in basketball and volleyball; the national women's team in basketball — European champions in 1958; the national football team — semifinalist at the Melbourne Olympics; the national women's team in artistic gymnastics; the national parachute team; and — last but certainly not least — the national cycling team, which won the Tour of Egypt three times running and so secured the Nasser Cup.

The sportsmen are organized in the Bulgarian Association for Physical Culture and Sports, which directs and co-ordinates the activity of all the sports clubs in the country. A large section of the population is also member of the Voluntary Auxiliary Defence Organization, where car and motorcycle driving, rowing, yachting, shooting, gliding



and parachute jumping are particularly well developed. Amateurs of hunting and fishing have their own association, while lovers of nature and alpinists belong to the Bulgarian Tourist Union. A number of newspapers and magazines are published, providing sports information and popularizing the various sports disciplines. Special health services and the Central Physical Culture Research Institute exercise control over sports in their respective spheres.

The new organization of physical culture and sports is based on principles of all-round bodily development, of the inculcation of sports habits and the raising of the standard of health through the various sports disciplines.

The harmonious development of man's spiritual and physical qualities -- that is the lofty socialist slogan which the sports movement in Bulgaria is called upon to serve. That is why, as part of the general progress, the sports movement is advancing by leaps and bounds, making its worthwhile contribution to the further flowering of the spiritual and physical health of the new socialist man.

## *Information for Intending Visitors*

Bulgaria welcomes every visitor from abroad who wishes to acquaint himself with its scenic beauty, to undergo a cure in one of its numerous spas, to travel in its mountains, or to spend a pleasant and profitable summer vacation on its sunny Black Sea coast. Our country offers a number of facilities to foreign guests as regards their entrance and stay.

*Entry and transit visas* for foreign tourists and holiday-makers, travelling in groups or individually under the auspices of the Balkantourist Travel Agency, are issued by Bulgarian legations and consulates abroad at a 50 per cent discount. Transit visas are valid for a 48-hour stay in the country.

*Foreign exchange and customs formalities* have been cut to a minimum. Foreign currency may be freely brought into the country and taken out again.

No Bulgarian currency may be brought in or taken out.

A *tourist premium* of 40 per cent over and above the official rate is granted to tourists on their foreign exchange; this applies to U. S. dollars, British pounds, Swiss francs, West German marks and other Western currencies.

*All travel by air, rail or ship* within the confines of the country is at a 30 per cent discount whenever the ticket is paid for in foreign exchange.

*Petrol, aviation petrol and other fuels and lubricants* are sold at bargain prices.

*Balkantourist* runs a nation-wide network of comfortable, modernlly-equipped hotels and restaurants, where foreign

tourists have the choice of European or American service (3 meals a day included) at reasonable rates.

*Balkantourist* buses and cars are at the disposal of foreign tourists and holidaymakers, who wish to travel across the country and acquaint themselves with its scenic beauty and places of historic and other interest. Excursions are organized along previously determined routes or according to the visitors' special preferences.

Groups of 15 or more are entitled to a free cicerone/guide.

*Balkantourist* car service is at the disposal of foreign tourists who travel by car — garage, cleaning and greasing, auto-repair service etc.

*Information and foreign exchange bureaux* have been opened at all entrance and exit frontier points, at the railway stations and airports of Sofia, Varna and Plovdiv, as well as at the *Balkantourist* hotels in Sofia and the provinces.

### *How to get to Bulgaria*

Bulgaria is connected by air, rail and highway lines with all parts of the world.

*Airlines* — Aeroflot (U. S. S. R.), CSA (Czechoslovakia), Deutsche Lufthansa (German Democratic Republic), Tarom (Rumania), LOT (Poland), YUAT (Yugoslavia), MALES (Hungary), KLM (Holland), Sabena (Belgium), SAS (Scandinavia).

*Railways* — *Danube Express*: Sofia — Bucharest — Kishinev — Kiev — Moscow.

*Balt-Orient Express*: Sofia — Belgrade — Budapest — (Warsaw) — Prague — Berlin — Stockholm.  
Sofia — Budapest — (Warsaw) — Prague — Berlin.

*Balkan Express*: Vienna — Zagreb — Belgrade — Sofia — Istanbul.

*Simplon Orient Express*: London — Calais — Paris — Lausanne — Milano — Trieste — Lyublyana — Zagreb — Belgrade — Sofia — Istanbul.

*Taurus-Express*: Sofia -- Belgrade-- Zagreb --  
Lyublyana-- Salzburg - Munich -- Cologne--  
Brussels--London.

London--Brussels--(Amsterdam) -- Cologne --  
Munich--Salzburg--Zagreb--Belgrade -- Sofia  
--Istanbul.

Sofia--Nish--Skopie-- Salonika-- Athens.

*Highways* -- Important roads, connecting Europe with Asia and Africa, pass through Bulgaria. These include: Sofia--Belgrade -West Europe; frontier point: Kalotino. Sofia--Istanbul--Asia(Africa); frontier point: Kapitan Andreyevo.

Sofia--Bucharest; frontier point: Roussé.

Sofia--Salonika; frontier point: Koulata.

Several other good roads are usable at any time of the year.

*The Bulgarian Touring Club* is wholly at the disposal of foreign tourists using their own motor vehicles, supplying them with free information material, advice on legal and customs matters, necessary travel documents, etc.

Tourists using their own motor vehicles should have a temporary crossing certificate through a frontier control service or a pink triptych, issued by the International Automobile Federation or the International Tourist Union, as well as valid driving permits.

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